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by
John D. Buenker
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PROGRESSIVISM

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INTRODUCTION

In the opening years of the twentieth century a number of reformers joined together to try to improve the quality of American life. Many of them for a short time supported a national political party, the Progressive Party, which offered an alternative to the Republicans and Democrats. That party gave a name to the reformers. Within another generation, historians were talking about the "progressive movement" of the pre-World War I years and placing the movement in "the American reform tradition" that stretched at least from Jacksonian democracy to the New Deal. There the progressives have remained, familiar to all students of American history as advocates of municipal reform, the New Nationalism, and the New Freedom.

Historians have approached these years of reform in a number of different ways. They have viewed this period as a "Progressive Era" but have differed sharply about how to analyze the era and about its significance for the student of general American history: For some writers, the period was one of triumphant efforts at reform, a time when city governments, election laws, tariffs, income taxes, and the financial framework of the country received analysis and restructuring of incalculable benefit to the nation. For others the period was one of useless rhetoric, business domination of the government, and reform charades that received extensive publicity but that only, in fact, distracted public opinion from the need for more basic, true reform.

Approaches and techniques in historical analysis of the era have been even more varied. Historians have looked at economic alliances, social status, religious biases, voting behavior precisely measured, intellectual assumptions, and reform tradition. By the 1970's, the result was something like chaos. Historians could no longer even agree whether or not there had been a "progres-

sive movement" at all, when the era began or ended, or whether even the general concept of progressivism was worth extended attention. In 1970 a young historian, Peter Filene, summarized some of the confusion in the historical literature and wrote "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" His impressions deserve to be quoted at length, for they provide the authors of the present book with a point of departure in creating new syntheses of progressivism.

Amid their many disagreements, historians of the progressive movement seem to disagree least on its goals. In fact, they maintain substantially the same definition as Benjamin De Witt offered in 1915: the exclusion of privileged interests from political and economic control, the expansion of democracy and the use of government to benefit the weak and oppressed members of American society. More specifically, the standard list of progressive objectives includes: constraints on monopolies, trusts and big banking interests; regulation of railroad rates; lower tariffs; the direct primary; initiative, referendum and recall; direct election of U.S. Senators; women's suffrage; child- and female-labor laws; pure food and drug laws and conservation.

But as soon as some of these issues are examined in detail, the progressive profile begins to blur. For either the historians or their historical subjects have differed sharply as to whether a "real" progressive subscribed to one or another part of the program. The most familiar debate focused on federal policy toward trusts and has been immortalized in the slogans of "New Nationalism" versus "New Freedom." In 1911 Theodore Roosevelt bitterly rebuked those of his alleged fellow-progressives who wanted to split industrial giants into small competitive units. This kind of thinking, he claimed, represents "rural toryism," a nostalgic and impossible desire for an economic past. Roosevelt preferred to recognize big business as inevitable and to create a countervailing big government. But alas, he lamented, "real progressives are hampered by being obliged continually to pay lip loyalty to their colleagues, who, at bottom, are not progressive at all, but retrogressive." Whether Roosevelt or the rural Tories were the more "real" progressives depends, presumably, on which side of the argument one stands. In any case, subsequent historians have echoed the Bull Moose by typically describing the big-business issue as "one of the more basic fault lines" and as "uneasiness and inconsistency" in "the progressive mind"—although this singular split mentality suggests at least schizophrenia, if not two minds.

If this were the only divisive issue within the progressive program, it would not raise serious doubts about the movement's identity. But it is just one of many. The Federal Reserve Act of 1913 created, according to Arthur Link, a conflict between "uncompromising" and "middle-of-the-road" progressives. In another sector of the economy, legislation on behalf of workers split the movement into two factions, whom one historian distinguishes as the more conservative "political Progressives" and the more liberal "social Progressives." But even the latter group disagreed occasionally on the extent and the tactics of their general commitment to social welfare on behalf of labor. A final example of progressive disunity concerns the struggle to achieve women's suffrage, a cause that has generally been attributed to the progressive movement. Yet progressive Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson entered late and grudgingly into the feminists' ranks; William Borah preached states rights in opposition to enfranchisement by federal action and Hiram Johnson never reconciled himself to the idea under any circumstances. More general evidence emerges from a study of two Congressional votes in 1914 and 1915, both of which temporarily defeated

the future 19th Amendment. Using a recent historian's list of 400 "progressives," one finds progressive Congressmen almost evenly split for and against women's suffrage. . . .

In the flickering light of these myriad disagreements about progressive goals, both among progressives and their historians, the concept of a "movement" seems very much like a mirage. Not so, replies Hofstadter. "Historians have rightly refused to allow such complications to prevent them from speaking of the Progressive movement and the Progressive era," he contends. "For all its internal differences and counter-currents, there were in Progressivism certain general tendencies, certain widespread commitments of belief, which outweigh the particulars. It is these commitments and beliefs which make it possible to use the term 'Progressive' in the hope that the unity it conveys will not be misconstrued." Thus Hofstadter finds an integral movement by turning to the values underlying the specific goals. Optimism and activism—these, he says, are the ideological or temperamental traits distinguishing progressives.

Discrepancies emerge quickly, however. As Hofstadter himself notes, threads of anxiety cut across the generally optimistic pattern of the progressive mind. Mowry describes the ambivalence even more emphatically: "the progressive was at once nostalgic, envious, fearful, and yet confident about the future," he writes. "Fear and confidence together" inspired progressives with a sense of defensive class-consciousness. Of course, human attitudes are rarely all of a piece, and certainly not the attitudes of a large group of persons. Moreover, this mixture of ideological mood—this ambivalence—fits well into Mowry's and Hofstadter's description of progressives as status-threatened members of the middle class.

Nevertheless, even this more precise generalization about progressive values encounters difficulties, primarily because it is not precise enough. It generalizes to the point of excluding few Americans in the prewar era. . . .

Attempts to establish a coherent pattern of multiple correlations between progressive factions and progressive ideas apparently lead to a dead end. In fact, even the less ambitious research simply to generalize about the movement's membership has produced baffling inconsistencies. The more that historians learn, the farther they move from consensus. . . .

If efforts to identify a coherent progressive program, ideology and membership shatter against the evidence of incoherence, there is still less hope for success in identifying a homogeneous progressive electorate. Historians working in the ante-computer era had to be content with impressionistic data. In general they claimed that progressivism drew political support from urban middle-class voters as well as farmers and organized labor. So far only a few scholars have investigated this topic with the sophisticated tools of behavioral social science. According to research in the state of Washington, for example, the progressive electorate tended to comprise the more prosperous and educated population, both in agricultural and in urban-industrial areas. In South Dakota, prewar progressives also found support among the rich, but not especially the urban, native-born or Protestant rich. In Wisconsin, on the other hand, Michael Rogin has found that the poorer the county, the higher the progressive vote. His analysis of progressivism in California, South Dakota and North Dakota uncovers still another electoral pattern: namely, a shift from middle-class to lower-class support, and in California a shift as well from rural to urban. Theodore Roosevelt's campaign as Progressive Party candidate in 1912, however, did not conform to this latter pattern. According to Rogin, "the electoral evidence questions whether the Progressive Party was typically progressive. . . ."

Historians of the progressive movement are struggling desperately to fit their concept onto data that stubbornly spill over the edges of that concept. Their plight derives largely from the fact that they are dealing with an aggregative group as if it were a collective group. That is, they move from the observation that many Americans in the early 20th century were "reformers" to the assertion that these Americans joined together in a "reform movement." But this logic is elliptical, slurring over the intermediate question of whether the reformers themselves felt a common identity and acted as a collective body. Certainly one would not assume that mystics or conservatives or conscientious objectors constitute "movements" in behalf of their beliefs. Yet students of the progressive movement have made precisely this assumption, only to find that the facts do not form a bridge leading from a progressive aggregate to a genuine progressive collectivity.

When historical evidence resists the historian so resolutely, one must question the categories being used. For those categories are constructs, artifices by which one tries to make sense of the inert and profuse evidence. When they create less rather than more sense, they should be abandoned. As Lee Benson has remarked about "Jacksonian Democracy": "If at this late date the concept remains unclarified, it seems reasonable to doubt that it is solidly based in reality." . . .

Nor is a shift of terminology sufficient. George Tindall has tried, for example, to escape Link's dilemma by defining progressivism as "the spirit of the age rather than an organized movement. . . ." The notion of a *Zeitgeist* performs the useful function of periodization, setting these decades apart from the "eras" before and after. But its usefulness stops at the general level of analysis. To speak of a "progressivism" or "the progressive era" is to wrap the entire period within an undifferentiated ideological embrace without saying anything about the diversity within the period. One thereby overwhelms the very distinctions which are crucial to an understanding of the conflicts and changes that took place.

Salvage efforts should be resolutely resisted. A diffuse progressive "era" may have occurred, but a progressive "movement" did not. "Progressives" there were, but of many types—intellectuals, businessmen, farmers, labor unionists, white-collar professionals, politicians; lower, middle and upper class; southerners, easterners, westerners; urban and rural. In explaining American responses to urbanization and industrialization, these socio-economic differences are more important than any collective identity as "progressives." . . .

At this point in historical research, the evidence points away from convenient synthesis and toward multiplicity. The progressive era seems to be characterized by shifting coalitions around different issues, with the specific nature of these coalitions varying on federal, state and local levels, from region to region, and from the first to the second decades of the century. . . .

The present state of historical understanding seems to deny the likelihood of a synthesis as convenient and neat as "the progressive movement." In their commitment to making sense of the past, however, historians will continue to search for conceptual order. Perhaps, after further studies of specific occupations, geographical areas and issues, a new synthesis will appear. But if that is to occur, the "progressive" frame of reference, carrying with it so many confusing and erroneous connotations, must be put aside. It is time to tear off the familiar label and, thus liberated from its prejudice, see the history between 1890 and 1920 for what it was—ambiguous, inconsistent, moved by agents and forces more complex than a progressive movement.*

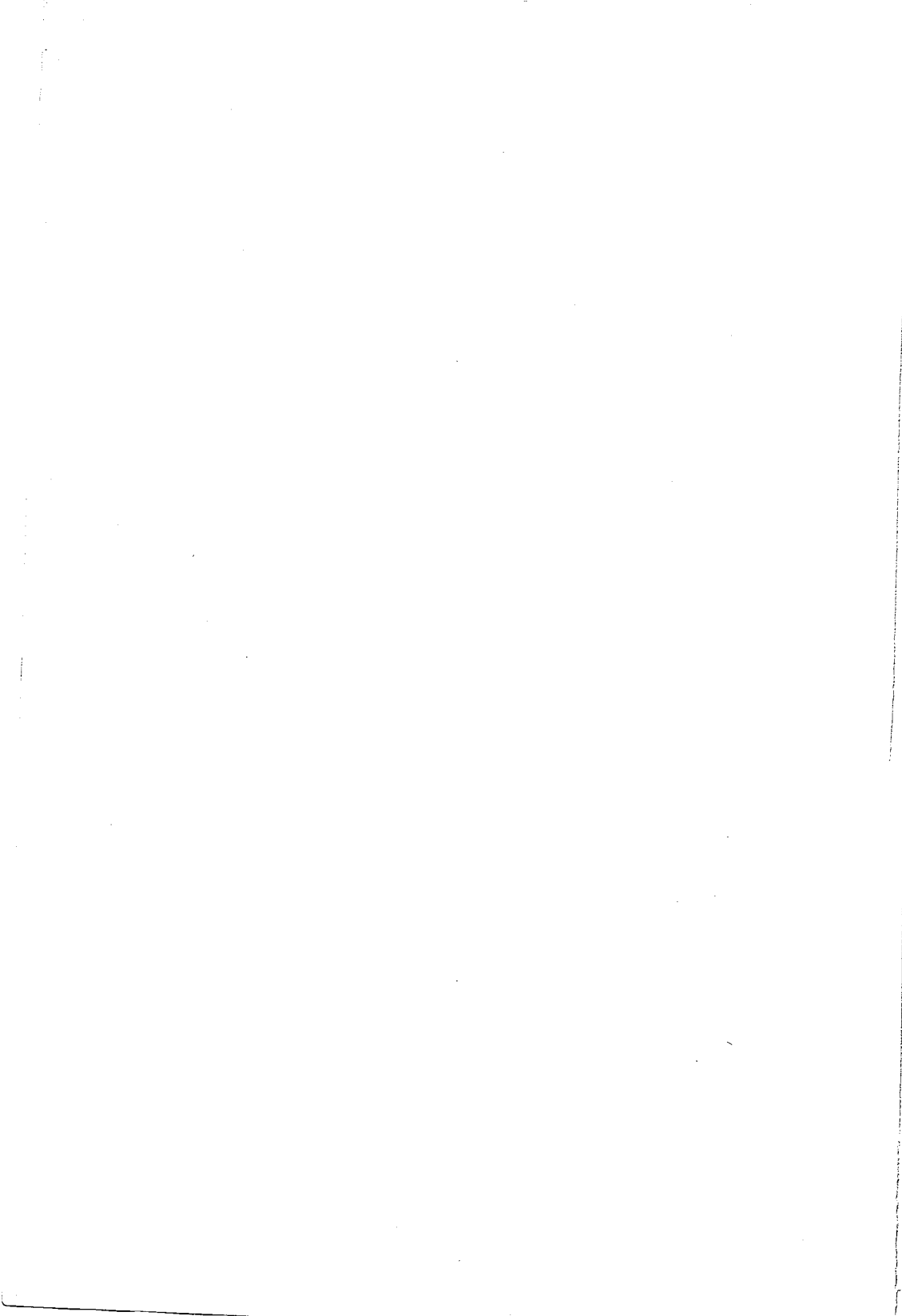
*Excerpted and reprinted by permission from Peter G. Filene, "An Obituary for 'The

In answer to this challenge and to similar discussions by other historians, then, three well-known scholars who are intimately acquainted with the history of the United States in the progressive years have joined together to write the book that follows.

They all agree that a Progressive Era did occur, and that it made significant contributions to American history. They disagree, however, on many specific issues, in ways that indicate some of the continuing areas of scholarly controversy in the field. John Buenker has taken a new look at political progressivism, and, through extended analysis of progressivism on the state and local levels, reinterpreted much of the recent literature on what traditionally has been the focus of historical analysis. John Burnham has brought in broader social and cultural issues, shifting the emphasis on reform to nonpolitical areas of American life. Robert Crunden has chosen to concentrate on the childhood and youthful religious experiences of key progressive thinkers, to show how psychology and biography illuminate the basically religious background of much apparently secular progressive activity.

The three scholars were expressly chosen because of their differences of opinion and focus. Each has added a rejoinder discussing the work of the others. The hope of the authors is that these rejoinders will sharpen scholarly understanding of the basic issues in this field, crystallize conceptualizations, and raise questions that will stimulate further study and research.

ESSAYS



ESSAY

by John C. Burnham*

For two generations many of America's best historians struggled to portray the Progressive Era of the early twentieth century in a meaningful way. Their analyses were revealing and stimulated much research. Yet none of these writings left historians, generally, with a sense of closure. By 1970 one of their younger colleagues could write "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" suggesting that, so far, accounts of the pre-World War I era had been merely a justification of politicians of another era, politicians who had claimed some sort of unique righteousness but whose claim their descendants would disallow.¹ The obituary was premature, however, for at almost that same time sufficient fresh scholarship became available so that a new understanding of the reality and significance of progressivism was possible. Now, after even more research has appeared, a fresh perspective is imperative.

Reconstruction of the history of progressivism, it should be stated candidly, is impossible without first examining the false turns that mark and mar the first fifty years or so of historical effort. The chief of these errors was a focus that was too narrow, for progressivism wrought effects very broadly in American society. Nor have historians tended to view the progressives in terms of what was real in those times rather than the actuality of later generations. The substantive achievements of the reformers are in fact instructive. So, too, is the structure of the movement. And essential to historical understanding are the qualities that distinguished progressivism from earlier reform movements.

The historians who failed to master progressivism made two types of

*Particular thanks for suggestions are owed to Gary Reichard, Gerd Korman, and Gerald Nash. Writing was supported in part by assigned research duty from The Ohio State University.

errors. First, they focused on political history. Progressivism was in fact not fully comprehensible within the old Presidential synthesis of American history. The records of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson did not explain or even illustrate what people at the time considered a major reform movement. Even state histories of progressivism tended to degenerate into mere political narrative, although many events there suggest some of the ferment. And despite rich source materials, investigators of progressivism in the cities found the phenomenon confusing, because municipal reform was well underway in the late nineteenth century, before the progressive label existed, and that same municipal reform was still a force long after World War I. All of this attempted political interpretation in later historical writing is understandable, for the political ideas, ideology, and unsystematic sentiments of many Progressive Era writers were particularly appealing to subsequent generations of intellectuals. The older historians did in fact provide a good intellectual history of political thinking of that period, and from one point of view verbalizations of reform sentiment and programs constituted a most substantial legacy of progressivism. The writings of Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, and even Roosevelt and Wilson have persistent significance and appeal. But the better political historians insisted that, to be viable, progressivism had to be based on actual political behavior.² Many scholars found themselves turning, therefore, to specific local history, in much of which reform was surprisingly conspicuous,³ but they, like other writers, ended up refining progressivism out of existence because there seemed to be no clear beginning or end of local reform. Honoring the tradition that history is past politics, it never occurred to them that developments in politics could be mere epiphenomena of more basic forces and changes.

The error of emphasizing the political face of progressive reform had more causes than simply the traditions of the historical craft alone. Writers of the early twentieth century who articulated the "progressive" point of view spoke in terms of political power and legal and legislative redress of wrong and prevention of evil. Many of the progressives—perhaps most—believed that politics was of overwhelming importance. The most reformist journals led off with and focused on everyday—and usually national—politics. Because reformers conceptualized events of their own times in this conventional mode, they diverted later students from the sources and arenas of the most dramatic and effective campaigns to bring about change in America.

Beyond a mistaken emphasis on politics, historians were plagued by casting all progressive reforms in the pattern of the New Deal (or an idealized New Deal). The result was to portray the progressives as Americans who wanted to extend the power of government, and particularly of the federal government, over the lives of the citizens. No one should blame post-1930 writers for being children of their own times. But what is disturbing is that

the model persisted for more than one generation and that progressivism seemed to constitute a subject largely immune to professional self-criticism. When Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., attempted to remake Jacksonian democracy in the image of Franklin Roosevelt's political coalitions, he was soon called to account.⁴ But even when faced with substantial evidence that what passed for reform in the early twentieth century differed from that of the 1930's, historians did not face up to the fact that progressivism had importance and coherence above and beyond the relevance of progressivism to the New Deal.⁵

A whole new perspective on the meaning and significance of progressivism is therefore long overdue. Recent research suggests two ways of conceptualizing what happened. The first is that a number of streams in American reform coalesced for a few years, reinforcing each other so as to cumulate in what contemporaries recognized as progressivism. This model has the particular advantage of explaining how many reform efforts, such as those in the cities, existed before and after the critical prewar decade, and how at the same time progressivism was meaningful in terms of a special ferment that people at the time recognized as important in effecting changes in American life and institutions. Some of the dynamics of this coalescence are discussed below.

The second way to conceptualize progressivism is to focus on the changes which actually did occur in those years, and on how those changes came about. Clyde Griffen has made a good start in describing a "progressive ethos," an idealism marked by "the juxtaposition of a practical piece-meal approach to reform with a religious or quasi-religious vision of democracy." Even conservatives, Griffen points out, were confused by the moralism and idealism and evangelism that welled up together, affecting and marking a generation.⁶ That the coincidence of directions of historical development also coincided with the ethos is what gives substance to the existence of progressivism.

Because long extant reform movements became a part of progressivism, various writers tried to set the date of the exact beginnings of progressivism all the way from the 1880's to several years into the twentieth century. In fact, the movement crystallized sometime around 1907. What happened just then showed up in both public mood and in the pace and quality of change. Maxwell Bloomfield has shown that the popular magazines of the day changed in tone suddenly in 1907-1908, from defensive, sometimes muck-raking criticisms, to discussions of a positive nature about the promise of American life. The age of the negative exposé gave way to an age of positive reform—progressivism.⁷

Institutional and organizational developments paralleled the development of the new mood. Dewey W. Grantham, Jr., in tracing the genesis of progressives' political crusades to the expansion of local activities, cites 1906 as the

year when activity boiled up to the state level. In the private sphere, it was about 1908 that philanthropic fund raising was transformed both in organization and in public appeal.⁸ Many other signs compel the conclusion that for about a decade before the entry of the United States into World War I, there was a direction of change sufficiently coherent to constitute the progressive movement—recognizable by the confluence of specific reform streams and by a general ethos.

So powerful was the ethos that for years large parts of the population believed that they were involved in a social movement and that the times somehow demanded certain reforms in American life. Robert Wiebe has shown, for instance, how self-interested economic groups in business and labor allied themselves from time to time with a central reform coalition so as to obtain specific legislation.⁹ With all of the different streams coming together at once, progressivism of course took on many different appearances to various different people. But sensitive bellwethers of American opinion, even such as Calvin Coolidge, who had a brief "progressive" period, all pointed the same general direction in the years before the war. In 1912 Thomas A. Edison wrote his old friend, Henry Ford:

. . . this is a pretty raw, crude civilization of ours—pretty wasteful, pretty cruel, which often comes to the same thing, doesn't it? And in a lot of respects we Americans are the rawest and crudest of all. Our production, our factory laws, our charities, our relations between capital and labor, our distribution—all wrong, out of gear. We've stumbled along for a while, trying to run a new civilization in old ways, but we've got to start to make this world over.¹⁰

Those who defied prevailing pressures by pursuing selfish interests were careful to insist that their intentions were public-spirited, and, indeed, who can know for certain the exact mix of motive? In 1913 Harry A. Wheeler, president of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, asserted that the Chamber was "officered by the most virile life of the community, interested not only in the upbuilding of commerce but in the purification of civic life." Perhaps the political bosses did support welfare legislation because the growing masses of immigrants strained the system of welfare, patronage, and graft, and perhaps high tax rates did bring property owners into campaigns for honesty and efficiency.¹¹ Nevertheless a whole range of reform efforts in politics and in the private sector materialized in those days because there was substantial support for reform among many kinds of Americans.

Insistence on the public weal was what made progressivism so distinctive. In the rhetoric of the day, "selfish" and "self-serving" were bad adjectives, "unselfish" and "public-spirited" good. Herbert Croly in 1914 caught the spirit by contrasting "live and let live" with "live and help live." Service in the public interest was an ideal that a surprisingly large number of Americans took seriously.¹²

Because the progressive movement was an aggregate of a great many efforts to reform American life, another traditional historical approach, the biographical, was not particularly profitable to scholars trying to understand the whole movement. Many a participant in one of the constituent reform efforts would in other aspects of his life be relatively inactive. Even very conspicuous progressives were often inconsistent, leading one specific reform movement while ignoring or opposing another. Prohibition and antimonopoly stances in particular created many well-known personal inconsistencies. John Braeman, working just with political figures, was able to spell out the values of two types of apparent progressives, the forward looking and the backward looking, the latter those Theodore Roosevelt once labeled believers in "a kind of rural toryism."¹³ Individual men and women were in life inconsistent in many ways. That circumstance, however, should not obscure the independent fact that such apparently idiosyncratic actions added up to a social movement discernible both then and now.

Moreover, despite such specific differences of opinion, a fluid but identifiable set of leadership groups existed across the country who in the progressive decade headed up reform efforts and shared general attitudes and values. Research over the years has described this leadership within philanthropy and social work, within health and technical reform, and within many other specific areas. The core group of progressives had good informal communications. Religious reformers in Chicago and Atlanta had direct ties with the Boston elite involved in charities, and both groups had easy access to intellectual radicals in New York and practical moral and health reformers in the cities of the Pacific Coast. A surprisingly large percentage of the leaders had ties of one kind or another to Harvard, and there were many signs of New England background.¹⁴ Each of the many specific reform efforts that went into progressivism called forth differing sets of supporters, but channels used for opposing child labor also tended to be used for prison, peace, health, and religious reform—in each case varying according to differences in mode of operation among the prime movers.¹⁵

Numerous studies of the progressive political leaders and individual biographies of other types of progressives show that the leadership was almost invariably upper middle or upper class in background. So also, however, were most of the leaders who embodied resistance or opposition to reform. The progressives differed from the others only in that they were, on the average, substantially younger than the non-progressives.¹⁶ Progressivism appears therefore to have been reform that was led and supported primarily by one segment of the "better" people in America. What differentiated them besides youth—and started them off to carry out substantial and rapid social changes? These identifiable leaders offer at least a partial answer to the question of the historical origins of the movement.

The actions and the convergence of ideals of the progressives can be understood in part in terms of negative reactions to earlier events and in part in terms of positive forces that had been building up in the late nineteenth century. On the negative side, David Thelen suggests that in Wisconsin and, presumably, other areas, the depression of the 1890's shocked various elements of the state into an awareness that most members of the community were both consumers and taxpayers, and so attempts to shift power back to "the people" gradually came to replace home-and-morality reform efforts.¹⁷ Other negative reactions to the acute hard times and violence of the 1890's persisted long after hard times had disappeared. In part this negativism metamorphosed itself into the "quest for community," the search for neighbors supportive of traditional values, that was so characteristic of the times. In part negative reactions intensified other aspects of the search for order and righteousness.¹⁸

The effectiveness of the well-known muckraker movement in the years just after the turn of the century testifies to a widespread discontent that made magazine readers particularly susceptible to believing that the country's businessmen and politicians were causing the most pressing social problems. The negative tone of the muckrakers removes them from the generally constructive spirit of the progressives, and, in fact, as noted above, the demise of muckraking coincided with the rise of progressivism proper. In the progressive years even such a stalwart among the muckrakers as Lincoln Steffens reached a point where he felt the need of positive "solutions" instead of mere criticism.¹⁹ Exposing the corruptions in American life was not a comprehensive part of the reformers' attempts at social reconstruction, but muckraking was nevertheless an important negative preliminary to reform.

Still another type of revulsion that set the stage for a new vision of American life was revulsion against the image of the city. Even within urban areas themselves large numbers of Americans were still seeking the virtues of rural communities that they had known as children. This contrast of the idyllic with the crowded and diseased city underlined the reaction of most Americans to the evils that festered in the slums, especially as the alien New Immigration increasingly became identified with the large metropolis. A number of progressive reforms involved attempts to change both the character of the city and its inhabitants.

As Roy Lubove has emphasized, the uplifters did not reject the city itself, where specialization and cooperation could thrive.²⁰ The city image engendered negative feelings because of the indolent, indulgent, and degenerate aspect of civilization found there. Beginning with Theodore Roosevelt's advocacy of manliness and the strenuous life right down to the Boy Scout movement and Walter Lippmann's quest for "mastery," the progressive leaders seemed preoccupied by what James R. McGovern has called the

"virility impulse," embodying a positive image of strength, character, personal force, and primitivism exalting the romantic view of the wilderness.²¹ This type of thinking could easily be directed against convention or even gentility as well as urban degeneracy and was deeply involved in the upsurge in nationalism that marked the progressives' visions. During the 1890's, in fact, great changes had taken place in both popular and genteel culture in America. The concern with health, exercise, activity, and vigor that showed up in the virility impulse coincided with the growth of romantic individualism. This new consciousness of self therefore became another element in the progressive ethos. At first negative, and always subversive of traditional ways and forms, the activism of the new generation provided energy to reform before World War I.²²

The progressive ethos, however, could not have developed as a purely negative force. Neither the older moral and community reformers nor the muck-rakers were able to galvanize Americans into the activities of progressivism. Anger about the corruptions of city life, the trusts, the bosses, and "the system" did not suffice to develop post-1907 constructive efforts. The Panic of 1907, the only concrete event connected with the crystallizing of the movement, did move many businessmen to defensive positions as well as inspire others to ally with social workers to reduce the level of discontent in the community.²³ But the real history of progressivism lies rather in the clearly delineated positive ethos and in the specific accomplishments of that generation.

The ethos has been described by historians already. In the decade before World War I, large numbers of Americans embraced many or all of a number of beliefs that facilitated change: optimism, leadership by an enlightened elite, environmentalism, romantic individualism, and cultural nationalism. That congeries is not equivalent to welfare statism nor what came to be the rationale for the New Deal. What was both real and truly effective was that progressives, with all of their inconsistencies, were united in a general viewpoint, not in support of particular types of meliorism or agendas of reforms. In 1916 a former social worker, James Oppenheim, summed up the progressive shift in a three-line poem:

Understanding—not faith
Will—not hope.
Service—not charity.²⁴

The progressives rightly understood that their sense of their own power to change the world was different from the pessimism of an earlier day, whether represented by thinkers convinced of the futility of disturbing a fragile social order during the 1890's or intellectuals who shared William Graham Sumner's passive belief in automatic progress. As the young Walter Lippmann expressed

the new sense of competence in his significant contrasting of *Drift and Mastery* (1914), actuality "... is plastic, and ready to be moulded by him who understands it."²⁵

The progressives could be optimists because they were fundamentally environmental determinists. Most of the visions of the future, about which the reformers were so sanguine, depended upon changes in American society that would transform citizens and alter behavior. These leaders argued that human beings are to some extent malleable.²⁶ Their environmentalism ranged from attacking indirect causes of social problems—housing, recreation, sanitation, and alcohol—to a general advocacy of education, uplifting influences, and fresh air and open spaces. Even inherited defect, many progressives believed, could be minimized in a society that motivated the practice of eugenics (especially positive eugenics). The many analyses by the social workers, social scientists, educators, and thinkers of the day who talked about achieving social control show that these environmentalists were for the most part sophisticated and hardheaded, however much they shared basic assumptions with enthusiastic reformers of the Enlightenment or pre-Civil War periods. "There is always present the danger of superficiality," wrote Southern reformer Edgar Gardner Murphy, "But the risk of making fools is of smaller import than the chance of making men." And social gospeller Walter Rauschenbusch admitted that "the world can be neither sinless nor painless. . . . If perfection were reached to-day, new adjustments would be demanded tomorrow. . . ." Yet he went on to insist on the possibility and urgency of "Christianizing the social order." "We shall demand perfection," he wrote, adding, "and never expect to get it."²⁷

About the crucial question of precisely who should manipulate the environment and who should decide which manipulations were desirable, the progressive leaders had no doubts or hesitations: they would. Deference to experts and technicians was an important theme in progressive thinking. Intellectuals did talk about the difficulties of reconciling paternalism with "democracy," but usually the goal was an informed, self-reliant citizen who presumably would agree with the controlling elite.²⁸ In fact, many did, and the reformers often generated widespread public support.

The final ingredients that marked progressives' outlooks, cultural nationalism and romantic individualism, are difficult to evoke for a cynical later generation. Idealization of the citizen who would be produced by meliorism was one aspect of the individualism. He would be, in the words of Jane Addams, imbued with the "social ethic." Another aspect of individualism was a widespread belief in the power of each person to remake his own life and his own culture (such beliefs often ignoring the social determinism inherent in environmentalism). Charles Brodie Patterson, an inspirationalist writing in 1910, urged Americans to do well but to recall that "individual success must

never be considered apart from its effect upon society." Still, such writers urged each man and woman to maximum effort to discover the potentialities within the self:

The Will is God, the Will is Man
The Will is power, loosed in thought. . . .
(Frank Channing Haddock, 1916.)²⁹

In so far as these exhortations were directed to the leaders, the individualism was consistent with ideas of social control. The discovery of inner potential in both child and adult gave much of the flavor to both the leadership and the environmentalism that would free those forces.³⁰

The fervent nationalism of the progressives is perhaps even more difficult to re-create sympathetically than romantic self-discovery. Because the rhetoric later was used to justify both participation in World War I, and wartime and postwar suppression of dissent, Americans of another day mistakenly discounted the patriotic fervor that was involved in "The Promise of American Life." The progressives' paradoxical attitudes toward imperialism, non-involvement, pacifism, and war dovetailed well together as versions of "national interest." "The American democracy," wrote Croly, "can . . . safely trust its genuine interests to the keeping of those who represent the national interest. . . . Only by faith in an efficient national organization and by an exclusive and aggressive devotion to the national welfare can the American democratic ideal be made good."³¹

It is entirely possible, as a number of historians have shown, to discover the internal inconsistencies in progressive thinking and the differences between various leaders or intellectuals. While sometimes suggestive of the sources of tension in the progressive movement, these studies fail to explain the perceptions of the people of that day that progressives had a vital commonality that linked their efforts together. "One of the most inspiring movements in human history is now in progress," wrote political scientist Frederick A. Cleveland in 1913. Moreover, the general style that emphasized sometimes conflicting private organizations dedicated to the public interest was symptomatic of a more fundamental agreement that such groups could and should advance the public interest and especially temper the conflict between social demands and individualism.³²

Just to have thought and felt as they did, and to have expressed themselves, would have made the progressives significant in American history. But beyond that, they took action on the basis of their beliefs. Many of their endeavors, it is true, resulted in little accomplishment and were essentially bureaucratic exercises in an increasingly bureaucratic society. Other ventures, however, had profound effects upon the lives of many Americans, and on

that basis the progressives, their beliefs, and their accomplishments were and are of major importance.

The progressives' record shows that those reforming Americans tended to have very broad and inclusive approaches to social problems. The historians' error of emphasizing political events has been particularly misleading by obscuring the diversity and heterogeneity of the progressives' effective concerns. The Country Life Commission, for instance, was given a comprehensive charge and then went on to investigate homemaking, education, buying and selling, communication, organizations, land (tenancy and rent), farm labor, finance, public health, and social life—an imposingly nonpolitical analysis of the constituents of Americans' existence.³³

The agency through which the progressives usually effected change was the traditional American voluntary organization. Just as economic development was based in large part upon private parties operating through private entities, so reformers utilized voluntary groups to mobilize both leadership and monetary support. Each of these organizations existed fundamentally to change the behavior of Americans in a certain limited area, usually by means of persuasion, so that educational programs were common to all of the efforts. Because of the progressives' increasingly sophisticated views of the causes of particular evils, they often ventured far afield in attempts to overcome those evils. The confluence and cumulation of the programs, both old and new, that constituted the coherence of the movement therefore tended to appear in the form of comprehensive meliorism. The organizations, with their wide range of goals, were the cutting edge of reform, and the achievement of many of those goals the measure of progressivism.

Typically, the earlier efforts, such as the peace and settlement house movements, all of which coalesced into progressivism, continued with a vigor derived from social reinforcement.³⁴ Marginal groups such as the antituberculosis societies found themselves suddenly in the mainstream. And some of the older groups rewrote their history to show that they were "progressive" in an earlier period. Such were the health officers of New York City who had been collaborating with political bosses interested in patronage matters; when progressivism became fashionable, the health officials cast off their involvement with compromising politics and pretended that they had always been the purest of reformers, in effect denying the impact of the spirit of the times upon them.³⁵

New groups with new hopes flourished. The nationalization of reform, like the nationalization of business, involved a dramatic shift in scale and aspiration. "National," embodying both aspirations to aggrandizement and cultural nationalism, was the first word in the names of many of the most conspicuous reform organizations such as the National Civic Federation.³⁶ Indeed, the

large, private corporation in many ways provided a model for the organizational society that blossomed in the progressive years.³⁷

Progressivism appeared in virtually every aspect of existence—even beyond the list of concerns of the Country Life Commission. Life itself and health were among the most pressing interests of reformers. The safety-in-industry movement grew out of both industrialists' solicitude and a collaboration between social workers and businessmen.³⁸ Special campaigns against tuberculosis and venereal diseases combined the social workers with physicians.³⁹ Improvement of diet and "health habits" in general also represented a major task of the uplifters. Special campaigns, such as arranging supplies of pure milk to the cities, were especially effective.⁴⁰ Many general alterations of the physical environment, too, were undertaken in part for the sake of health.

Basic social institutions were another focus of the reformers. Both pro- and antidivorce campaigners wanted to strengthen the family. General purity and anti-venereal disease campaigners came to foster sex education as the best way to make monogamy work. They saw satisfaction in marriage as not only the best preventive of both disease and impurity but the key as well to preservation of the family. Thus wiping out prostitution and preventing disease contributed to both health and marriage. Labor reformers of varying interests, too, invoked the sanctity of the family as an argument for one course of action or another.⁴¹ The churches increasingly became involved in the social gospel in general and in social regeneration in particular. In 1912 the congress of the Men and Religion Forward Movement was told that "religious questions have become so closely related to ethical theories and moral issues that the line of demarcation between the secular and religious, as such, has been erased."⁴² The schools, entrusted with a rapidly expanding clientele, served both as objects of reform, as professionalization increased, and as the means through which many of the progressives hoped to uplift the nation permanently.⁴³ Through such agencies as settlement houses and the YMCA, adult education, too, expanded dramatically, often in the interest of reforming the way of life of the urban masses, although this generation witnessed also the effective establishment of the county extension agent and other rural education and improvement institutions. Basic charity institutions were organized, reorganized, and invigorated for the purpose of both caring for the unfortunate and, like the churches and schools, uplifting them.

Business was no more immune to reform than other institutions. "The new competition" represented efforts to set up rules of fair play and eliminate extreme competitive practices that benefited no one. Industrial democracy and industrial welfare took root in the United States before World War I. Workmen's compensation schemes and laws came from the efforts of reformers and businessmen together.⁴⁴ The gospel of efficiency and scientific

management spread from the industrial plant and affected all of society. Nor was the pursuit of efficiency mere rhetoric. The standardization of parts and products that the engineering societies helped implement during World War I had already, a few years earlier, actually reduced production costs. "Rationalization" within business and industry worked out in many ways.⁴⁵

Within the professions the progressive impulse appeared in multifarious guises. Reformers tried particularly to broaden the nature of professional functioning, most notably in education, social work and engineering, and to refine the nature of professionalism and professional behavior in American society. The most dramatic example of this trend was the revolution in medical education following the Flexner report of 1910.⁴⁶ The ideal of professional behavior itself was close to the dynamics of progressivism.

Many of the reforms had to do with the quality of life in general. The conservation movement, for example, based on concern for both efficiency and environment, was one of the most significant legacies of the era. Attempts to adjust children to live rewarding lives in the twentieth century and to become socialized and cooperative were the concern of reformers in education. Housing reformers attempted to make the physical environment more conducive to both personal and social well-being. Each of such reform efforts, so easily listed, affected the lives of millions of Americans, often in most significant ways.⁴⁷

The cumulative impact of all of this activity to upgrade conditions in America and reform American habits was immense. One English student of the American scene suggested in 1911 that the times were ripe for a new prophet to arise in the United States, and people at the time did not entirely discount the idea.⁴⁸ In many instances, as noted above, concrete achievements beyond membership lists, meetings, propaganda dissemination, and other formal organizational efforts are hard to demonstrate. But taken as a whole, the programs of the reformers constitute an awesome demonstration of the power of determined private citizens working together to effect social change on a large scale.

Any general textbook in American history lists the federal government policies and enactments that presumably represent progressivism. Antitrust efforts and attempts to rationalize competition in interstate commerce appear prominently in these lists, along with pro-labor or pro-labor union actions and incidental items such as the Mann Act and, in the better texts, prohibition. Sometimes imperialism is characterized as progressive, sometimes not. Most text writers also mention achievements on the state and local levels: workmen's compensation insurance laws; the initiative, referendum, and recall; the city manager and commission systems.

Certainly this list of governmental reforms is impressive. But the fact remains that the progressives were at best ambivalent about using govern-

ment action. At times they did have high hopes that a reform executive, legislature, or judiciary, or some specific law, might bring about needed changes. Repeatedly, good government advocates built up their own expectations and those of others. The many attempts to get at the will of the people—presumably wise and public spirited, in contrast to “the interests”—are a tribute to the reformers’ good will and optimism. But the overwhelming result of righteous persons’ entering politics was an almost unbroken record of ultimate defeat for virtue. It is no doubt symbolic that only after he was defeated for office did Seth Low, mayor of New York, turn to private channels to effect reform.⁴⁹

Events of the late nineteenth century had caused so much distrust of government that few decent people wanted to get involved.⁵⁰ One precedent for a private alternative had been set by the purity movement, in which women who could not vote were attempting through the influence of their homes to strengthen basic social institutions. When governments failed even to enforce decency and to protect the family, the private reform groups of the purity crusade, including the Women’s Christian Temperance Union and the mothers’ movement, attempted to foster in each home and community a social environment that would cause the children to grow up to be pure, public spirited, and strong.⁵¹ Throughout the progressive years reformers continued to show their mistrust of government by placing primary reliance upon nonpolitical agencies and institutions to make meliorism effective. The reformers did not, for the most part, shy away from organization or bureaucracy in the private sector; indeed, the principal agencies through which they worked, organized groups, were sometimes highly structured. And as Gerd Korman points out, one of the most important and effective agencies through which reformers imposed their ideas on other Americans was the private employer. Industrial firms, by providing a workable, effective alternative for the exercise of power, permitted progressives to bypass political processes.⁵² The progressives’ aversion to government was therefore based on experience, an experience that diminishes dramatically the importance and significance of the political history of that era.

Equating the extension of governmental power for social justice purposes, or what came to be called welfare statism, to the spirit of progressivism is therefore an error. It is true that many Americans admired German cameralism and socialism. And many Americans did come to think that the neutral state would have to intervene more actively to maintain traditional liberty and freedom in society and so become a service state. But to portray the attitudes of progressives toward political activity and power as anything beyond ambivalence is to distort the movement beyond recognition. “Our national ideal,” wrote David Graham Phillips as early as 1905, “is not a powerful state, famed and feared for bluster and appetite . . . but manhood and womanhood,

a citizenship ever wiser and stronger and more civilized—alert, enlightened, self-reliant, free.”⁵³

Reformers showed their aversion to government in two general strategies. The first was to avoid government involvement entirely, as in endeavors such as the community chest movement, the Boy Scouts, and many aspects of health reform. The reformers' second strategy to keep the private sector dominant was using government in a strictly secondary, derivative way to achieve their ends. A good example is provided by the campaign to wipe out hookworm in the South, the debilitating parasite that became known as “the germ of laziness.” Charles Wardell Stiles, a zoologist and public servant, led a persistent campaign that finally resulted in funding by the Rockefeller charities. From 1909 to 1914, using the Rockefeller money and support donated by the railroads, Stiles and his cohorts carried on a campaign to get people to wear shoes and employ sanitary privies. The campaign consisted partly of education, partly of enlisting the administrative powers of sometimes reluctant local health authorities. Stiles and his kind had no commitment to government but only to any means that appeared effective. In terms of economics and health alone, the impact of the hookworm crusade on the lives of millions of people was momentous.⁵⁴

This aversion to government was in part an aversion to party politics, to the selfishness that the reformers saw in partisan loyalty and the working of the party and spoils system. The voluntary associations represented a counterforce to regular parties and sometimes, as in the cases of the purity and temperance movements, to the churches as well. Many of the political changes associated with progressivism, such as the initiative and referendum, were intentionally subversive of partisan politics (although the innovations were sometimes turned back and used against the reformers themselves). Non-partisan elections and the model law and uniform state law were other tactics symptomatic of a general revulsion against inefficiency and self-serving partisanship. It was no coincidence that the rhetoric of the day coupled together selfishness, parties, and inefficiency. Except for the progressives' commitments to the family, the nation, and morals, they might be considered in effect anti-institutional.⁵⁵

The apolitical or antipolitical orientation of the activists was not what distinguished progressivism from American reforms, whether pre-Civil War or New Deal, however. The progressive movement differed from other reforms and the era differed from times before and after particularly because of the quality of the moral fervor of the reformers. Clyde Griffen has shown that both within the churches and within many of the individual movements that made up the whole, the ethos involved mass striving for a culture in which small town virtues such as decency and brotherhood were worked out within a large scale democratic and melioristic framework.⁵⁶

The evangelistic framework also helps to explain the social basis for the hegemony, for a few years, of a progressive generation—the young people whose leadership set them apart even in politics. They grew up in the late nineteenth century when there existed a powerful revivalism that separated sentiment and behavior from theological orthodoxy. To a remarkable extent a consensus idealism, worked out in practice in such forms as the purity and mothers' movements, pervaded the middle classes. Most of the progressives came of age in the decades of intense religious feeling when the better families devoted themselves to decency, self-improvement, and altruism. Even young Henry Morgenthau, Sr., who was not in the Protestant mainstream, remembered being inspired by "a vision of a life of unselfish devotion to the welfare of others." Benjamin Flower in 1901 recognized "a rapidly growing band of young men and women who are consecrating their lives to the service of man and the making of a higher, juster, and truer civilization." George W. Perkins, later of progressive political fame, always made social service evangelism a part of his life, even when he was selling insurance.⁵⁷ In countless instances, late nineteenth century homes in which uplift was stressed can be shown to be the factor that produced a progressive generation.

Gregory Singleton has suggested that the practical evangelism of late Victorian Americans was an attempt of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestants and those identified with them to form an ethnic group in response to the development of the Irish ethnic group of the mid-century period. The success of the WASPs in imposing standards upon their own group led them consequently to attempt to impose those standards upon the entire culture. Likewise, numerous commentators have described American imperialism and interventionism as a drive to extend WASP-culture to the whole world.⁵⁸ Progressivism can be understood, therefore, as the culmination of a general cultural movement that agitated the entire society before World War I.

The moral idealism of the reform generation coincided with other general social developments of the new century. In an increasingly complex and interdependent society, bureaucratic organization and control flourished in all areas of American life at least as much as in uplift groups. As Americans more and more worked out their own specializations of function in society, they tended to view their roles in that society in terms of the function. The ideal functionary could negate self-interest and other interests and view his functioning as a service to society. In innumerable instances appointees who were supposed to represent an interest found themselves playing instead a bureaucratic role and advocating courses of action growing out of role function rather than special interest, courses of action that answered to general rather than selfish needs.⁵⁹ The growth of the bureaucratic way of life and of the ideal of unselfish service therefore complemented each other.

Within the constituent reform efforts of progressivism the professionals

were most easily identifiable because of both numbers and contributions. As professionals, they embodied the idea of unselfish service. Physicians, clergymen, educators, and social workers—the men and women of the helping professions—were particularly conspicuous. The progressive movement in turn accelerated the general trend toward professionalization in all of American life by popularizing the goal of disinterested service and coupling it with social approbation, most dramatically in social work and engineering. The ideal of a vocation as a “profession” found its way into many areas of American existence and carried with it at least some of the service ideal, even, for example, in advertising.⁶⁰ Sensitive to moral requirements of the culture, “professionals” were quick to claim moral benefits of their activities. Although affected by progressivism, the social changes involved in bureaucratization and professionalization in their turn helped to reinforce the idealism and enthusiasm of reformers.

The practical result of all of this moral fervor was that the progressive movement embodied an immediacy that distinguished the prewar phenomenon from any comparable reform ferment. Contemporary English reformers, for example, although they spoke as fervently as the Americans, were unable to take action effectively on a broad social front. Their reform proved to be merely rhetorical. American reform, by contrast, was marked by not only enthusiasm but also frantic activity.⁶¹ It is easy enough to laugh at the energy of Theodore Roosevelt, recalling the wit who thought him a combination of St. Paul and St. Vitus, but a whole generation of reformers did show their commitment in effort and active organization.

Such immediacy and commitment to reform suggests that the progressives possessed an unusual confidence in their ability to change the world. And they were confident. Moreover, their optimism was the essential force behind both aspiration and achievement—so much so as to demand explanation.

Despite their sometimes simplistic rhetoric, the progressives were not naive. Nor was their optimism naive. They did not attempt, for example, so much to get rid of prostitution as to take the profit motive out of it.⁶² Likewise they did not attempt so much to do away with the drinking of alcoholic beverages as to get at the profiteers in human misery. Rather than evangelize the lazy Southerners, the progressives tried to get rid of the physical burdens that disadvantaged so many people. The reformers were as willing to attack hereditary liabilities through the eugenics movement as to try to improve the environment by means of a host of other reforms. The literature as well as the activity of the reformers repeatedly showed that the leaders, at least, were often aware of the complexities of man, of society, and of history. They tried to concentrate on prevention of ills rather than correcting results, and the leaders' conceptions of causation moved their programs toward the

long range—hence their attention to the upbringing and environment of children even more than of misguided adults already set in their ways. It is particularly in the light of the progressives' sophistication that their optimism demands explanation.

The inspiration for reform was science, broadly understood to embrace also technology and medicine. And the inspiration was not theoretical but very real to those people. The contrast with earlier reform movements underlines the practicality of progressives. Where the vegetarians of the 1840's, whatever stimulation they may have received from technological innovation, had promised long life and female suffrage, men of 1900 saw both old and young rescued from the grave by new surgical techniques. Where there was in an earlier day promise of governmental reform, in 1903 the Wright brothers' flight had actually taken place. Electricity entered into everyday life, far more eloquent than visions of a republican utopia. What for years had been promise—largely the promise of political institutions—became, in the twentieth century, performance in nonpolitical areas. The performance was not casual or expectable. The ability of physicians suddenly to arrest diphtheria and permit a dying child to breathe once more and recover was a miracle comparable with those described in the Bible. Science had justified both extravagant hopes and men's beliefs in their own power to change the world. Moreover, the changes often involved the details of existence and gave personal meaning to optimism about transforming American life.⁶³

Science in the Progressive Era had many public aspects. By themselves the material achievements of the generation before 1906 provided concrete evidence of the almost unlimited possibilities of change. But the scientific attitude was abstracted and translated into two strategies that were applied to nontechnical areas of endeavor: the cult of efficiency and the use of the expert. In fact the wonders of pure science were not generally a part of the usual conception of science held by the educated public, except when external signs of prestige such as Nobel prizes and research endowments suggested esteem for science on the part of men of affairs.⁶⁴

Efficiency embodied a number of attributes that added up to hardworking, profitable, competent, and socially harmonious individuals and groups. As in the scientific management movement, progressives conceived of efficiency as the rational maximization of result for effort and organization—and planning and rational control to that end constituted "science." This objective use of intelligence was the nexus between science and the popular conceptions of science, particularly technology and the results of technology.⁶⁵

In so far as the reformers held in common any ideal of technique, the most striking allegiance they showed was to the expert in the service of uplift or democracy (the latter sometimes known as the "Wisconsin idea"). Herbert

Croly, in his eloquent verbalization, *The Promise of American Life* (1909), set up the scientists' way of proceeding as the model for citizenship. "No scientist as such has anything to gain by the use of inferior methods or by the production of inferior work. There is only one standard for all scientific investigators—the highest standard. . . ."66 By using experts in all aspects of American life, the progressives expected to bring the generalized benefits of disinterested science to the entire society. The socialist William English Walling in 1911 looked with approval upon the direction that progressive reform was tending: "Science is becoming more consciously pragmatic, more consciously concerned with the service of man. . . . And this is the science which now has the unqualified support and respect of the most able and advanced scientists of the time."⁶⁷

The objectivity of the scientist was embodied in the tendency of members of professions, as noted above, to avow their dedication to unselfish service and technical objectivity. As professionals foreswore personal gain, their expertise could serve a democratic society without the self-interest that would otherwise corrupt and discredit such an elite. For this rapidly growing, extremely influential segment of society, the ideals of unselfish service and efficiency served to validate both personal and social goals. And in organizations they tended to reinforce the process of bureaucratization.

Later generations who believed that interest groups and big government constituted the one true model for reform did draw inspiration from the progressives, but only in some of the rhetoric and some of the tactics and vision of their predecessors. The voluntary organizations could be viewed as pressure groups—but only if each group was turned into a selfish interest group.⁶⁸ Voluntary organizations pursuing altruistic ends are decidedly different from interest groups representing the self-serving demands of the New Deal and post-New Deal broker state. Chambers of commerce and trade associations, which also flourished early in the twentieth century, were not of the same category as the Urban League or Mental Hygiene Society. "If by some magic," wrote social gospeller Walter Rauschenbusch in 1914, "business life . . . could be plucked out of our total social life in all its raw selfishness, and isolated on an island, unmitigated by any other factors of our life, that island would immediately become the object of a great foreign mission crusade for all Christendom."⁶⁹

The cultural nationalism of the early twentieth century easily translated into identifying with an enhanced federal government, as was indicated by the common ground often noted between the New Nationalism and the New Deal. Likewise cultural nationalism contributed to the growing eclipse of local and regional nonconformity, another process hastened and blessed by WASP reformers.

Perhaps most intriguing of the progressive legacies was the vision that for

every ill of every person there was or should be a specialist to do away with that ill. Not content with general measures, such as those embodied in laws and public campaigns, the progressives saw the possibility of reaching every member of society to educate, to uplift, and to care. The antituberculosis and anti-venereal disease campaigns were both based upon treating every infected person, that is, every carrier of disease, regardless of the numbers of persons and the costs involved. This technique of providing special protections and services for each and every citizen was at the heart of the later welfare state strategy and at the same time constituted the major controlling device of the bureaucratic society that came to dominate mid-twentieth century America.⁷⁰ Particularly the health and social work contingents among progressives pioneered individual care and control. But they worked primarily through voluntary organizations operating for altruistic purposes, as opposed to the welfare state style that came to emphasize personal need and want—that is, selfishness.

The experience of World War I intensified the progressives' already ambivalent attitudes toward government. The actions of both state and local bodies estranged many, who typically moved into either disillusioned advocacy of purely private endeavor or the American Civil Liberties Union. Still another group saw in the wartime emergency a chance to bypass the usual political barriers to social reconstruction and to use the enhanced powers of the executive for reformist purposes. Such reformers typically lost faith in the power of an intelligent public but did not surrender the idea of leadership by an enlightened elite.⁷¹ These various experiences with government in fact contributed to the disintegration of the reform consensus in the divisive-ness and self-centeredness of the 1920's.

After World War I, the parallel reforms that had coalesced into progressivism once more parted. Many wealthy patrons of uplift associations died. A number of important spokesmen for the movement withdrew into art for art's sake or some similarly pure attempt, often with progressive roots, to strive for the ideal.⁷² Muckrakers of the Jazz Age, as Richard H. Pells observes, aimed their criticisms at "stupidity, aimlessness, and vulgarity." Others suffered disillusionments of various kinds, with various consequences. Harold Stearns in 1919 summed up a common re-evaluation and reconceptualization of American reform in the years just past:

We are becoming increasingly self-critical and dissatisfied with mere acquisition. Both our intellectuals and our creative literary men were emerging from their Transcendental towers of isolation. But American liberalism had two bad heritages to fight against . . . —one the heritage of race-hatred psychology of the unacknowledged negro problem, making for intolerance; the other the heritage of perverted moralism or the attempt to use a native idealism for specific prohibitions, making in its turn for coercion. Such, in brief, seems to me the strength and the fragility of American liberalism as it met the challenge of 1914.⁷³

This was the "liberal" view that was to become commonplace in another decade, one that ignored the positive achievements of the progressives.

Yet in the postwar years much of the voluntary associationism of the Progressive Era continued, and indeed the "association idea" was of central importance in the 1920's in general and in the career of Herbert Hoover in particular. Industrial welfare and business cooperation represented an enlightened continuation of ideas fostered in an earlier day.⁷⁴ When the New Deal came, coercion and centralization grew as an addition onto the core legacy. The tradition of caring and experiment continued, but the essentials of an earlier day, extreme reliance on voluntary groups and aversion to selfishness, diminished significantly.⁷⁵

A number of historians who in later times criticized the progressives in ahistorical contexts distracted attention from the strengths, accomplishments, and significances of the pre-World War I reformers. The progressives were not lower class, and they did seek to impose a WASP style of life on other people. The voluntary association is a device that upper classes traditionally used to help control the lower classes.⁷⁶ But to suggest that the changes were good or bad simply because of the attitudes of agents who carried them out would be purely ad hominem argument. The intent of the progressives was, by placing primary reliance on voluntary organizations, to change the living habits of most Americans. The organizations used education and persuasion and sometimes types of coercion to teach people to observe safety regulations and not to spit, and to coerce those who continued antisocial behavior in spite of explanations that would have convinced a prudent, educated WASP. That the progressives had somewhat less respect for cultural variation than sentimental later generations, is hardly relevant to the causes and consequences of a major reform program.

Likewise, later critics, impatient of change in their own times, thought the progressives worthy of scorn because they were essentially conservative. Perhaps the young intellectuals of the prewar period, who with Randolph Bourne thought of themselves as "radicals," misled later readers. In fact the reformers were interested in morals and in basic institutions, like any conservatives. And the progressives, whatever their dedication to justice, did not envisage any overturn of the general social hierarchy, although the term uplift involved increased well-being as well as social harmony. No doubt many believed, implicitly as well as explicitly, that reform was necessary for preservation, with emphasis upon the preservation.

Still another line of criticism is advanced by those who argue that the progressives did not make enough changes, that they failed to achieve completely all of their own goals.⁷⁷ The proper historical question is not whether

changes matched the avowed aims but, first, how the goals moved people to action, and, second, what actual changes, intended or not, occurred.

And the fact remains that the reformers advocated and carried out many changes in a short time, and, to save some institutions, they attacked others. To save and strengthen the family and traditional morals, the reformers were willing to break taboos and undermine the double standard. To preserve private ownership of business and a traditional labor system, the business progressives were willing to set limits to competition, to organize together, and to begin systems of welfare capitalism. To protect an open society, the progressives subverted political parties. These and a myriad of other changes suggest that, in that generation, conservatism may not have been a major force unless defined very flexibly. Probably it is more useful to follow Richard Hofstadter and Samuel P. Hays and characterize the reformers as people with guilty consciences who would not stand idly by when they saw social wrongs.⁷⁸

Since the progressives tried so hard to be unselfish, latter day critics belittled them by showing that public-spirited actions were really self-serving—that comfortably well off people would profit from social stability, that the managers of organizations would benefit from increasing bureaucratization, that businesses would make more money in an efficient society. Progressives have been portrayed as downwardly mobile people who were exalting experts in order to reverse social processes, and also as businessmen bent on greater monopoly. And of course they were damned in particular for not invariably advocating central government and/or cultural pluralistic solutions to all social problems, which fact in itself engenders suspicion on the part of anti-business “liberal” historians that “interests” were at work.

For all of these doubters and ahistorical critics, two facts are enough answer. First, progressivism involved many aspects of American life, including every major social institution—except, in some respects, perhaps, government. And, second, the progressives left behind them a substantial number of specific accomplishments. All of them were products of both human aspiration and complex historical forces.

What is left of progressivism now is the memory of a moment in time, perhaps ten years, when an altruism that was based on WASP ethnic group values united with hard facts of scientific and technological change. “It is this union of the idealistic and the efficient,” wrote intellectual Randolph Bourne in 1913, “that gives the movement its hold on the disinterested and serious youth of to-day.”⁷⁹ The result of the combination was as pure an unselfishness as has been seen in history, operating through voluntary associations to bring about widespread and significant changes in American life.

NOTES

1. Peter G. Filene, "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" *American Quarterly* 22 (1970): 20-34.
2. Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 55 (1964): 157-169.
3. Just such local work convinced one historian that generalizations that progressives neglected the oppression of blacks are not viable; Gilbert Osofsky, "Progressivism and the Negro: New York, 1900-1915," *American Quarterly* 16 (1964): 153-168.
4. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Jackson* (Boston, 1945).
5. Otis L. Graham, Jr., *An Encore for Reform, The Old Progressives and the New Deal* (New York, 1967); Richard S. Kirkendall, "The New Deal as Watershed: The Recent Literature," *Journal of American History* 54 (1968), 843-847.
6. Clyde Griffen, "The Progressive Ethos," in *The Development of an American Culture*, eds. Stanley Coben and Lorman Ratner (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1970), 120-149. Attempts at elucidating conservative opposition during this period have been unfruitful; see, for example, Richard W. Leopold, *Elihu Root and the Conservative Tradition* (Boston, 1954), showing an apparent conservative to be only an unsystematic legalist.
7. Maxwell H. Bloomfield, *Alarms and Diversions, The American Mind Through American Magazines, 1900-1914* (The Hague, 1967), 11. Cf. Dorothy M. Brown, "The Quality Magazines in the Progressive Era," *Mid-America* 53 (1971): 139-159. Louis Filler, *Crusaders for American Liberalism* (New York, 1961), chap. 28, and others associate the end of muckraking with business pressure. But other evidence indicates that merely negative exposés were already passé and that the muckrakers for their own reasons were turning to other types of publications; e.g., Robert C. Bannister, Jr., *Ray Stannard Baker, The Mind and Thought of a Progressive* (New Haven, 1966), especially 108-110, and Charles Forcey, *The Crossroads of Liberalism; Croly, Weyl, Lippmann, and the Progressive Era* (New York, 1961). Warren I. Titus, "The Progressivism of the Muckrakers: A Myth Re-Examined Through Fiction," *Journal of the Central Mississippi Valley American Studies Association* 1 (1960): 10-16.
8. Dewey W. Grantham, Jr., "The Progressive Era and the Reform Tradition," *Mid-America* 46 (1964): 227-251. Scott M. Cutlip, *Fund Raising in the United States, Its Role in Philanthropy* (New Brunswick, 1965).
9. Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962). A striking specific example is discussed in Anthony Raymond Travis, "The Impulse Toward the Welfare State: Chicago, 1890-1932" (Ph.d. Diss., Michigan State University, 1971), 28-29.
10. Thomas A. Edison to Henry Ford, *The Company* (New York, 1954), I, 531-532. Winston Hill, *Ford: The Times, The Man, The Company* (New York, 1954), shows that even Allen Flint, *The Progressive Movement in Vermont* (Washington, 1941), shows that even in politics in a one-party, conservative state there was progressive agitation and change that was recognized as part of a national movement. Aaron I. Abell, *American Catholicism and Social Action: A Search for Social Justice, 1865-1950* (Garden City, N.Y., 1960), especially 140-141, 181, describes how even antienvironmentalist Jesuits talked about "the social regeneration of our country."
11. Harry A. Wheeler, quoted in Paul W. Glad, "Progressives and the Business Culture of the 1920s," *Journal of American History* 53 (1966): 80. John D. Buenker, *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform* (New York, 1973), 46-48; Melvin Holli, "Urban Reform in the Progressive Era," in *The Progressive Era*, ed. Lewis Gould (Syracuse, 1974), 133-151.
12. Herbert Croly, *Progressive Democracy* (New York, 1914), 426. Joel A. Tarr, "The Urban Politician as Entrepreneur," *Mid-America* 49 (1967): 55-67, shows that reformers attacked the bosses for using politics for private purposes. See, similarly, Hays, "The Politics of Reform," 163. Theodore Lowi, "The Public Philosophy: Interest-

Group Liberalism," *The American Political Science Review* 61 (1967): 19, comments wryly on later developments exalting interest groups so as to make "conflict-of-interest a principle of government rather than a criminal act."

13. John Braeman, "Seven Progressives," *Business History Review* 35 (1961): 581-592. Daniel Levine, *Varieties of Reform Thought* (Madison, Wisc., 1964) concluded that no generalization about progressivism is possible.

14. Graham, *Encore for Reform*, 55-56; for a nonpolitical example see Lloyd C. Taylor, Jr., *The Medical Profession and Social Reform, 1885-1945* (New York, 1974), esp. chap. 2; Eric Anderson, "Prostitution and Social Justice: Chicago, 1910-15," *Social Service Review* 48 (1974): 216-218.

15. Filene, "An Obituary," made the error of saying that because no disciplined and clearly identifiable leadership existed, there was no progressive movement—using movement in the narrow sense of the Communist Party U.S.A. The progressive movement in fact meets the standards for a social movement set forth by Roberta Ash, *Social Movements in America* (Chicago, 1972), 2, especially the distinction between movement organizations and social movements proper. See, for example, Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York, 1967), 128-129; C. Roland Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898-1918* (Princeton, 1972), 90-98; Travis, "Impulse Toward the Welfare State," Nancy J. Weiss, *The National Urban League, 1910-1940* (New York, 1974) chapter 4.

16. Norman N. Wilensky, *Conservatives in the Progressive Era: The Taft Republicans of 1912* (Gainesville, Fla., 1965).

17. David Thelen, *The New Citizenship, Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin, 1885-1900* (Columbia, Mo., 1972).

18. Jean B. Quandt, *From the Small Town to the Great Community, The Social Thought of Progressive Intellectuals* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1970); R. Jackson Wilson, *In Quest of Community: Social Philosophy in the United States, 1860-1920* (New York, 1968); Wiebe, *The Search for Order*. Graham, *Encore for Reform*, 65n, suggests that pre-1900 reformers felt economic injustices more keenly than those who joined reform ranks later.

19. David M. Chalmers, *The Social and Political Ideas of the Muckrakers* (New York, 1964), 104.

20. Roy Lubove, "The Twentieth Century City: The Progressive as Municipal Reformer," *Mid-America* 41 (1959): 199, 200-201, 207-208. Quandt, *From the Small Town*; Wilson, *In Quest of Community*; Edward Stevens, Jr., "Social Centers, Politics, and Social Efficiency in the Progressive Era," *History of Education Quarterly* 12 (1972): 16-33.

21. James R. McGovern, "David Graham Phillips and the Virility Impulse of Progressives," *New England Quarterly* 39 (1966): 334-355; James Penick, Jr., "The Progressives and the Environment," in Gould, *The Progressive Era*, 115-131.

22. John Higham, "The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890's," in *The Origins of Modern Consciousness*, ed. John Weiss (Detroit, 1965), 25-48.

23. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform*, chap. IV; Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads for Reform, The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890-1914* (New York, 1967); Travis, "Impulse Toward the Welfare State."

24. James Oppenheim, "And the Greatest of These?" in *War and Laughter* (New York, 1916), 176. See, for example, William L. Bowers, "Country Life Reform, 1900-1920: A Neglected Aspect of 'Progressive' Era History," *Agricultural History* 45 (1971): 211-221.

25. Walter Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery, An Attempt to Diagnose the Current Unrest* (New York, 1914), 325.

26. It is only fair to add that earlier efforts at reform and cooperation had sometimes been successful and provided both experience and continuity between earlier reform and later uplift. Examples include Timothy L. Smith, "Progressivism in American Education, 1880-1900," *Harvard Educational Review* 31 (1961): 168-193; and K.

Austin Kerr, "Labor-Management Cooperation: An 1897 Case," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 99 (1975): 45-71.

27. Edgar Gardner Murphy, quoted in Levine, *Varieties of Reform Thought*, 92. Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order* (New York, 1912), 126-127.

28. Among others, Forcey, *Crossroads of Liberalism*, discusses this problem at length. Arthur Mann, "British Social Thought and American Reformers of the Progressive Era," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 42 (1956): 672-692, suggests the influence of English elitism.

29. The most relevant treatment is Richard Weiss, *The American Myth of Success, From Horatio Alger to Norman Vincent Peale* (New York, 1969), chaps. 5-7; the quotes are from 179 and 215.

30. Forcey, *Crossroads of Liberalism*, discusses some of the tensions in the formal writings of politically oriented progressive intellectuals. See similarly, David W. Noble, *The Paradox of Progressive Thought* (Minneapolis, 1958). Romantic individualism is of course related to the virility impulse discussed above.

31. Herbert Croly, *The Promise of American Life*, 1965 ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 270. See Graham, *Encore for Reform*, 38, and Arthur A. Ekirch, *The Decline of American Liberalism*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1967), chap. 11. David W. Southern, *The Malignant Heritage: Yankee Progressives and the Negro Question 1901-1914* (Chicago, 1968), suggests that in so far as blacks were excluded from American nationalism, so were they excluded from progressivism.

32. Frederick A. Cleveland, *Organized Democracy, An Introduction to the Study of American Politics* (New York, 1913), 438. Ellis W. Hawley, in *idem., et al., Herbert Hoover and the Crisis of American Capitalism*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1973).

33. *World's Work* 17 (1908): 10860. See similarly the evidence in John Lee Eighmy, "Religious Liberalism in the South During the Progressive Era," *Church History* 38 (1969): 359-372.

34. Arnold M. Rose, "Voluntary Associations Under Conditions of Competition and Conflict," *Social Forces* 34 (1955): 159-163, found that at a later time the voluntary groups were greatly stimulated by both competition from other groups and opposition, a phenomenon that would help explain the mutual reinforcement of the progressives. The voluntary group phenomenon itself in the context of other American institutions has long been recognized as fulfilling important social functions; for specific examples of group coalescence see Marchand, *The American Peace Movement*.

35. Daniel Fox, "Social Policy and City Politics: Tuberculosis Reporting in New York, 1889-1900," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 49 (1975): 169. Obviously such revision by principals has misled later historians.

36. See, for example, Davis, *Spearheads for Reform*, 314.

37. Suggestive discussions are Louis Galambos, *Competition & Cooperation: The Emergence of a National Trade Association* (Baltimore, 1966); Jonathan Lurie, "Private Associations, Internal Regulation and Progressivism: The Chicago Board of Trade, 1880-1923, as a Case Study," *American Journal of Legal History* 16 (1972): 215-238; Jerry Israel, ed., *Building the Organizational Society, Essays on Associational Activities in Modern America* (New York, 1972). Gregory H. Singleton, "Protestant Voluntary Organizations and the Shaping of Victorian America," *American Quarterly* 27 (1975), 549-560, suggests that church organization of the late nineteenth century was an important influence on other voluntary organizations.

38. See, for example, Gerd Korman, *Industrialization, Immigrants, and Americanizers, The View from Milwaukee, 1866-1921* (Madison, Wisc., 1967); Mancius S. Hutton, "Progress of the Safety Movement," *Scientific American Supplement* 77 (1914): 90-91; Edward L. Tinker, "The Man Who is Father of the 'Safety First' Movement, Ralph C. Richards," *American Magazine* 76 (December, 1913): 44-45.

39. Richard Harrison Shryock, *National Tuberculosis Association, 1904-1954, A Study of the Voluntary Health Movement in the United States* (New York, 1957); John C. Burnham, "Medical Specialists and Movements Toward Social Control in the Progressive Era: Three Examples," in Israel, *Building the Organizational Society*, 19-30.

40. Manfred J. Wasserman, "Henry L. Coit and the Certified Milk Movement in the Development of Modern Pediatrics," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 46 (1972): 359-390.
41. William L. O'Neill, *Divorce in the Progressive Era* (New Haven, 1967); John C. Burnham, "The Progressive Era Revolution in American Attitudes Toward Sex," *Journal of American History* 59 (1973): 885-908; Annie S. Daniel, "The Wreck of the Home," *Charities* 14 (1905): 624-629.
42. Griffen, "The Progressive Ethos," 149; see especially Ferenc M. Szasz, "The Progressive Clergy and the Kingdom of God," *Mid-America* 55 (1973): 3-20.
43. Rush Welter, *Popular Education and Democratic Thought in America* (New York, 1962), esp. chaps. 15 and 16; Lawrence A. Cremin, *Transformation of the School, Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957* (New York, 1961); William H. Issel, "Teachers and Educational Reform During the Progressive Era: A Case Study of the Pittsburgh Teachers Association," *History of Education Quarterly* 7 (1967): 220-233; and many other publications dealing with educational reform.
44. Korman, *Industrialization, Immigrants, and Americanizers*; and such statements as Arthur Jerome Eddy, *The New Competition*, 5th Ed. (Chicago, 1916), and Edward N. Hurley, *Awakening of Business* (New York, 1917). Milton Derber, "The Idea of Industrial Democracy in America, 1898-1915," *Labor History* 7 (1966): 259-286.
45. Samuel Haber, *Efficiency and Uplift, Scientific Management in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920* (Chicago, 1964). George V. Thompson, "Intercompany Technical Standardization in the Early American Automobile Industry," *Journal of Economic History* 14 (1954): 1-20.
46. Raymond E. Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency, A Study of the Social Forces that Have Shaped the Administration of the Public Schools* (Chicago, 1962); Cremin, *Transformation of the School*; Roy Lubove, *The Professional Altruist, The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880-1930* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965); Edwin T. Layton, Jr., *The Revolt of the Engineers, Social Responsibility and the American Engineering Profession* (Cleveland, 1971).
47. Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959); Joel Spring, "Education and Progressivism," *History of Education Quarterly* 10 (1970): 53-71; Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums, Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917* (Pittsburgh, 1962). Even in the arts there appeared to be counterpart movements parallel with progressivism. According to William H. Jordy, *American Buildings and Their Architects, Progressive and Academic Ideas at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Garden City, N.Y., 1972), 219-220, 373-375, in architecture Charles McKim wanted to lead and inspire with neoclassical designs, while the craftsman's movement used the adjectives "sincere, liberating, democratic, functional, organic." Even music was involved in the ethos of the day; see Robert M. Crunden, "Charles Ives' Innovative Nostalgia," *The Choral Journal* 15 (1974): 5-12.
48. "Social Forces," *The Survey* 25 (1911): 893.
49. Gerald Kurland, *Seth Low: The Reformer in an Urban and Industrial Age* (New York, 1971). Lewis L. Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists, Texas Democrats in the Wilson Era* (Austin, 1973), especially 38, shows how Southerners, because of attitudes left over from Reconstruction, wanted to keep government at all levels as weak as possible, and how this worked out in the prohibition controversy of the Progressive Era.
50. Thelen, *The New Citizenship*, is one work describing the disillusionment with politics.
51. David Pivar, *Purity Crusade, Sexual Morality and Social Control, 1868-1900* (Westport, Conn., 1973).
52. Korman, *Industrialization, Immigrants, and Americanizers*.
53. David Graham Phillips, *The Reign of Gilt* (New York, 1905), 191.
54. James H. Cassedy, "The 'Germ of Laziness' in the South, 1900-1915: Charles Wardell Stiles and the Progressive Paradox," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (1971): 159-169. Perhaps the most conspicuously influential group is described by Mar-

Progressivism: The Chicago Board of Trade, 1880-1923, as a Case Study," *American Journal of Legal History* 16 (1972): 215-238.

70. Burnham, "Medical Specialists."

71. Charles Hirschfeld, "Nationalist Progressivism and World War I," *Mid-America* 45 (1963): 139-156; Sidney Kaplan, "Social Engineers as Saviors: Effects of World War I on Some American Liberals," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 17 (1956): 347-369; Paul F. Bourke, "Culture and the Status of Politics, 1909-1917: Studies in the Social Criticism of Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, Randolph Bourne and Van Wyck Brooks" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1967). Allen F. Davis, "Welfare, Reform and World War I," *American Quarterly* 19 (1967): 516-533.

72. Nicholas Joost, "The Dial in Transition, The End of the Browne Family's Control, 1913-1916," *Illinois History* 22 (1965): 240-270. Travis, "Impulse Toward the Welfare State," 55-56.

73. Harold Stearns, *Liberalism in America: Its Origin, Its Temporary Collapse, Its Future* (New York, 1919).

74. Richard H. Pells, *Radical Visions and American Dreams, Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years* (New York, 1973), 22-23; Robert M. Crunden, *From Self to Society, 1919-1941* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 1-75; Hawley, in Herbert Hoover and the Crisis of American Capitalism, 3-27.

75. Clarke A. Chambers, *Seedtime of Reform, American Social Service and Social Action, 1918-1933* (Minneapolis, 1963). William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940* (New York, 1963), 338-340; Rexford G. Tugwell, "The New Deal—The Progressive Tradition," *Western Political Quarterly* 3 (1958): 390-427.

76. W. Lloyd Warner, *American Life: Dream and Reality* (Chicago, 1953), 194.

77. The most perceptive of these critiques is Jeremy P. Felt, "The Progressive Era in America: 1900-1917," *Societas* 3 (1973): 103-114.

78. Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform, From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York, 1955), 202-212; Samuel P. Hays, *The Response to Industrialism: 1885-1914* (Chicago, 1957), 76; Lubove, "The Twentieth Century City," 206.

79. Randolph S. Bourne, *Youth and Life* (Boston, 1913), 292.

ESSAY

by John D. Buenker*

The Progressive Era, Peter Filene wrote in "An Obituary for the 'Progressive Movement,'" "seems to have been characterized by shifting coalitions around different issues, with the specific nature of those coalitions varying on federal, state and local levels, from region to region and from the first to the second decade of the century." Although this positive definition of the dynamics of progressive reform has received scant notice compared to Filene's systematic dissection of the movement concept and his bold conclusion that "the progressive movement never existed," both logic and the mounting weight of evidence demonstrate that the notion of shifting coalitions provides a much more comprehensive explanation of the period than the one that he laid to rest. Viewing the era as the work of shifting coalitions rather than of a single movement has the potential for reconciling most of the currently conflicting interpretations and of encompassing nearly all of the groups, values and programs that were plainly at work.¹

The proponents of the "progressive movement" interpretation have generally centered it in an amorphous middle class of professionals, intellectuals and businessmen, who were almost exclusively of British-American stock, well fixed, college educated and "touched by the long religious hand of New England." The numerous disputes that have arisen over motivation, backgrounds, programs, and results have usually been resolved under the umbrella of this movement, even though the evidence often defies such characteriza-

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tion. Since each scholar has assumed that the group under study was a microcosm of a larger entity, the logical tendency has been to project one's limited conclusions to cover the whole. This "preoccupation with the syndromes of middle class anxieties and prejudices," as Edwin Rozwenc has observed, "has served to distract attention from the content of progressive policies and the complex relations that comprised the political process during the Progressive Era."²

Efforts to establish a common social type have proved to be largely unrewarding. "Progressive profiles" or "collective biographies" have established that many activist organizations were heavily populated by the native, Protestant middle class, but similar studies in numerous locations have demonstrated that these reformers differed little from many acknowledged conservatives of the day with respect to class, education, nativity, or similar considerations. As Samuel Hays has observed, "one cannot explain the distinctive behavior of people in terms of characteristics which are not distinctive to them." Nor have these profiles proved that their subjects had the influence, political skills and votes to enact legislation.³ Other scholars have uncovered evidence of reformist activity among segments of society that not even the most elastic definition of a native, Protestant, middle class movement could possibly encompass. The urban, foreign stock working class, a segment of society formerly held to be part of the "potent mass that limited the range and achievements of the American Progressive," has been shown to have contributed significantly to the success of reform in several key industrial states. A significant role in at least some areas has been claimed for midwestern German-American Catholics, Socialists, organized labor, social and business elites and former Populists, all of whom fall outside the pale of a native, Protestant, middle class movement. "Movements with tolerable progressive credentials," Lewis Gould has recently written, "have been found in the agrarian South, among machine politicians in the city, within technical and professional groups, the military, the arts, as well as in the more familiar environs of middle-class America."⁴

Small unit electoral analyses in three states have produced solid evidence that the constituencies backing reform candidates and measures in those states were neither homogeneous nor constant. Michal P. Rogin and John L. Shover have shown that Hiram Johnson and the progressive Republicans in California had two constituencies—the first urban, middle class, and native American and interested in business regulation and electoral reform, the second increasingly foreign stock and working class and attracted by labor and welfare measures. In Colorado, James L. Wright has argued, the Progressive Party vote was urban, middle class, and native, but it was not very "progressive," since the vote for it correlated badly with referenda on all reform measures except prohibition and resembled closely the Ku Klux Klan

vote of 1924. Support for acknowledged reform measures came instead from the former hotbeds of Populism, especially among urban labor and mine workers who voted heavily Socialist and Democratic during the Progressive Era. In Wisconsin, Roger Wyman has concluded, urban middle class and upper middle class wards leaned toward stalwart candidates, while Scandinavians, farmers, and German urban workers provided much greater electoral support for LaFollette and his successors. "In terms of both program and support," Wyman insists, "progressivism was an extremely complex and amorphous movement, held together by tenuous political alliances which had ethnic, economic, geographic, and personal roots."⁵

Nor have efforts to discern a common set of values or a coherent program among acknowledged reformers proved any more fruitful. Even among native, Protestant, middle class activists, such attempts have either produced ideas so general as to be held by practically everyone or so ambiguous and even contradictory, as to foreclose the possibility that members of the same movement could hold them simultaneously. Some have viewed its members as motivated primarily by idealism and altruism. The status revolution school has seen them seeking to recoup the prestige lost by the rise of big business and the urban masses. Yet another group, equally committed to the movement concept, has discovered not an old elite trying to reassert lost values, but a new one, trying to affirm a new order. For them, reform meant the realization of such bureaucratic and professional goals as systematization, rationalization and efficiency, an outlook that bound them together against all those forces which represented unpredictability and instability. Even among a handful of prominent Progressive Era intellectuals, Daniel Levine found that "they did not share a body of fundamental assumptions about man, society, government and the good life." They "saw not the same social reality, but social realities of very different sorts." Virtually every significant issue of the era drove deep fissures into the ranks of the very group that was supposed to constitute the heart of the "progressive movement."⁶

Other segments of society pursued reform from far different value systems. Foreign stock reformers were motivated by a mixture of their Old and New World experiences. In the old country the family, the community, the village, the guild and the landlord had restricted their opportunity for socioeconomic advancement, but had also assumed some measure of obligation for their well-being. In those countries touched by the industrial revolution, its impact had been partially ameliorated by conservative social classes and institutions. The welfare state emerged much earlier in Europe than in the United States. In America immigrants benefited from the ministrations of the ward boss, the clergy, and the fraternal and benevolent societies that gave material aid and sought to preserve distinctive values and customs. Catholicism, Judaism, the eastern Orthodox religions, and Lutheranism had never adjusted to capi-

talist values as completely as had the various offshoots of Calvinism which were the major American denominations. Their clergy also generally preferred to leave alcohol, gambling, and other human vices to the individual conscience guided by the Church. Less influenced by the Enlightenment and the Protestant ethic, they had little faith in the perfectibility of man and society, but they did believe in amelioration. "A coherent community structure," Herbert Gutman has found, "allowed these lower-class, first-and-second-generation immigrants enough leverage to begin to humanize the emerging industrial social system." Southern Populists, Socialists, and Mid-western Insurgents proceeded from still other value systems.⁷

Nor was there a single "progressive" program. The label "progressive reform" has been affixed to efforts to increase popular political participation as well as to those to turn government over to a group of experts immune from electoral politics. Dealing with the problem of big business through trust-busting, through regulation, or through public ownership have all been designated as progressive solutions. Reformers have been portrayed as sympathetic to the rise of organized labor as well as hostile toward it, as fostering the growth of the welfare state as well as resisting it. Those who sought to legislate conformity to established cultural norms have been held equally progressive with those who opposed such measures. What was the "progressive" side of such issues as prohibition, Sunday blue laws, immigration restriction, disfranchisement and segregation? Some scholars have termed such cultural legislation as aberrational, while others have seen the same measures as a logical outgrowth of the reform impulse. Nomenclature, as David M. Kennedy has observed, "can be stretched over such vast expanses of time and temperament only at the expense of descriptive accuracy."⁸

Despite the difficulties, most Progressive Era historians have held on to the concept of a movement. Some have sought to account for the apparent discrepancies by positing the existence of two or more such movements, each retaining a basic native, Protestant, middle class character. Thus there have been analyses of political versus social progressives, uncompromising versus middle-of-the-road progressives, traditionalists versus moderns, New Freedom versus New Nationalism, eastern versus midwestern-southern progressivism, and nativists versus cultural liberals. All of these have been essentially intramural distinctions that have failed to reconcile most of the glaring contradictions or accommodate the wide variety of reformers who did not fit the urban, middle class, native Protestant mold. "When historical evidence resists the historian so resolutely," Filene has argued persuasively, "one must question the categories being used." Small wonder that Levine has concluded that "the word 'Progressive' has been used in so many ways that it has lost all clear meaning except as a designation for a particular time period or a

particular political party. As a description of either an ideology or a political program, I find it worthless and misleading."⁹

By contrast, loose, shifting coalitions suffer from few of the conceptualizing disabilities associated with a coherent movement. Coalitions are, by definition, temporary. They are not limited to any single social type. They require no fundamental agreement upon values or motives; factions with significantly different outlooks on life can usually find limited areas of accommodation and cooperation. "To make a coalition," the philosopher Michael Novak has observed, "mutual love is not required. Mutual respect, or even mutual need, will do." A single proposal could easily find its way onto the platforms of organizations with little else in common and be supported by them for a number of different, and even contradictory, motives. All that is necessary is that a sufficient number of people agree upon this particular measure here and now, no matter how they arrived at that point or where they might go later. The notion of shifting reform coalitions requires no "stretching at the expense of descriptive accuracy." It dismisses no group from participation because it fails to meet preconceived standards of class, ethnicity, or belief. Because the make-up of coalitions varies over time and place, there is no mandate to make what happened in California square exactly with what occurred in Rhode Island or to view the situation in 1914 as being necessarily what it was in 1906. In short, the concept of dynamic coalitions provides the best hope of resolving most of the apparent conflicts and of encompassing the multitude of groups, motives, and programs that were operating.¹⁰

The politics of compromise, conciliation, and coalition have been the hallmark of the American system from the beginning. The Constitution itself resulted from a series of compromises between large states and small, between commercial and agricultural interests, between slaveowners and employers of free labor. The framers of the document established ground rules to contain economic, sectional and religious differences, and give them room to interact peacefully. In *The Federalist*, Madison specifically rejected as "impracticable" the notion that national unity could ever be accomplished by "giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions and the same interests." He helped create instead processes for controlling the possible ill effects of "faction" by allowing disputants to interact. Political parties, too, emerged as nonideological vehicles for electing men and distributing the spoils of office, concerned with ticket balancing and issue fuzzing. "Ordinarily," political scientist Robert Dahl has argued, "the making of government policies requires a coalition of different sets of leaders who have diverging goals," as well as different resources and constituencies. This brokerage of combinations became even more pronounced as industrialization, urbanization and immi-

gration produced fundamental redistributions of wealth, power, and status and created deep cleavages based upon class, occupation, geography, ethnicity, and religion. The prime order of business for most Americans during the Progressive Era consisted of coping with these developments so as to enjoy prosperity, security, and human dignity.¹¹

Industrialization, as Bernard Weisberger has said, "virtually turned the entire history of modern America into the story of a reaction to dynamic economic forces." The concentration of wealth in the upper brackets increased significantly,¹ while a 35 percent rise in the cost of living between 1897 and 1907 seriously undermined the prosperity of a large segment of the population. Frequently recurring depressions made financial security nearly impossible to attain. Concentration of control in the major industries gave a relative handful of corporations and financial institutions the leverage and economies of scale to dominate smaller enterprisers, farmers, laborers, and consumers. Pressed by these emerging financial and industrial combines, government at all levels responded with subsidies and other aid that greatly enhanced business' position.¹²

Farmers found that selling in a free market and buying in a protected one meant increasing costs and decreasing profits. Laborers discovered that mechanization and a surplus of unskilled labor led to long hours, low wages, dangerous working conditions, child and female labor, and job insecurity. The nation's drive toward industrial supremacy also polluted its air and water and depleted its natural resources. The various elements of the economy became increasingly interdependent; a general business downturn or structural weakness in one area affected the other sectors, no matter how healthy or well managed. Depersonalization and dehumanization of the industrial process increased the gap between owners, managers, workers, and consumers. The South and West, limited to extractive industries and dependent upon the capital, transportation, and processing of the Northeast, developed increasingly sectional, even colonial, outlooks. Perhaps worst of all, a system based upon laissez faire, Social Darwinism, and the Gospel of Wealth provided virtually no security against industrial accident or illness, old age, unemployment, or business failure.¹³

The absorption of thirty-five million immigrants between 1814 and 1914 added a new range of problems. Although the influx generally expanded the nation's markets and drove native born Americans up the socioeconomic ladder, many contemporaries were convinced that it displaced workers and drove down living standards. With the exception of the British, Scandinavians, and some Germans, the majority of the new arrivals brought with them a culture that was fundamentally antithetical to that established by the nation's original settlers. The differences were firmly rooted in religious tradition and dealt with such profound issues as the relationship between God and man, the

connection between this world and the next, the individual's relationship to society, and his conception of good and evil.¹⁴

These differences in religiously derived value systems were arranged along a continuum with "pietism" or "evangelicalism" at one end, and "ritualism" or "liturgicalism" at the other. Pietism was the common outlook that united most of the traditional native American sects with the majority of northwestern European, Protestant immigrants. Pietists shared a conviction that hierarchical organization, dogma, and liturgy prevented an intimate personal relationship with God. Their major criterion for membership in the religious community was a "personal, vital and fervent faith in a transcendental God." Since they virtually eschewed any dogma or ritual and had little hierarchical organization, pietists had almost no temporal help against the evil which existed in the world. To strengthen their resolve and give testimony to their salvation, pietists strove to eliminate evil, both for themselves and their neighbors. Moral suasion and good example might prove sufficient, but, if not, pietists felt a strong moral obligation to pass coercive legislation to save others from their follies. Although American secular life was officially non-denominational, it was suffused with pietistic values that were inculcated by nearly every important mainstream institution. Grafted upon this base was a rapidly emerging "culture of technology" which saw the individual largely in terms of his role in the industrial system. Through bureaucratization, rationalization, and systematization, there was to be a reordering of human relations to promote maximum efficiency. The more culturally homogeneous a society was, the better fitted it was to produce and consume. Protestant religion, Anglo-American culture, and technological imperatives formed a mutually reinforcing system of mainstream values.¹⁵

The ritualistic outlook was shared mostly by Roman Catholics, Greek and Russian Orthodox, Episcopalians, and many German Lutherans. Its essence was the intellectual assent of the individual to a common body of doctrine, buttressed by an elaborate ritual, and presided over by a hierarchy with clearly delineated authority. Religion was much more a social experience than an individual one, since "outside the Church there is no salvation." The world, it held, was filled with evil, but basically good, because it was made by God as a testing ground for separating the saved from the damned. The key word in the use of fleshly pleasures was moderation rather than abstention; defect was as much condemned as excess. The ritualist was inclined to accept the world as he found it and cling to the beliefs and practices of the Church to assure his salvation. The church, rather than the state, was the proper arbiter of moral conduct, especially in a Protestant-dominated country. Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, and Jewish immigrants also arrived in the United States with almost no previous exposure to most of the tenets of either Anglo-American or technological culture. Most brought with them

fundamentally different, and even antithetical, attitudes toward marriage, women, child rearing, sex, happiness, sorrow, death, work, leisure, success, food, drink, and the whole range of human behavior. They settled with their fellow countrymen in ethnic enclaves, endeavoring to preserve their indigenous systems of accumulated beliefs, styles, solutions, and practices. They sought to retain their native language and founded their own churches, parochial schools, newspapers, ethnic businesses, and fraternal and benevolent societies in order to maintain a separate identity and culture.¹⁶

Modern day theorists still disagree over the end result of this interaction between the immigrant and America, over how much assimilation and acculturation has taken place. Generally, the answers have fit one of three basic patterns. According to the Anglo-conformity or core culture model, the host culture demanded and received almost total assimilation and acculturation, either because of the superiority of American institutions and culture, periodic "Americanization" crusades, or the irresistible logic of modern, technological life. In the second, or melting pot model, there is no core culture, but an American identity and culture that is an amalgam of all the various elements who settled on the continent. In the third model, pluralism is central, whether structural or cultural, suggesting that America is a nation of nations, with subsocieties and subcultures that will continue to persist for many generations.¹⁷

The pluralist view was in its infancy during the Progressive Era, the property of advanced intellectuals and social workers and of millions of immigrants who sought to cling tenaciously to their identities and cultures. Millions of other Americans divided between those who demanded forced "Americanization" and those who trusted to the strength of existing institutions and culture to "melt" the newcomers. The former sought to legislate conformity through prohibition, Sunday blue laws, forced public school attendance, antigambling and antivice drives, the mandatory use of English, the breakup of urban political machines, Americanization programs, and the restriction of immigration. The latter were generally content with partial assimilation and acculturation, confident that the passage of time and exposure to the American way of life were more effective socializers than coercive legislation. They sponsored settlement houses, missionary work by Protestant churches, night schools, the resettlement of immigrants away from big cities, protective societies to guard migrants against exploitation, and they looked upon restriction and forced Americanization as unwelcome last resorts. The differences between the two points of view were not absolute and grew even less so as the numbers of New Immigrants increased and the Americanizers grew more strident.¹⁸

Ethnocultural differences also had profound political implications. The new quantitative political historians have marshalled strong evidence that

ethnic and religious backgrounds were the best predictors of voting behavior during the age of mass migration. Voting was above all a cultural act. Far from being irrational, voting for a fellow ethnic or for the party most favorable to the aspirations and cultural outlook of a nationality group was one of the few intelligible actions one could take in a system in which politicians generally eschewed ideology and parties avoided ideological confrontations. A candidate of one's own ethnocultural background was not only more likely than an outsider to dispense material benefits, but also more likely to enhance the group's prestige and self-esteem. Ethnoreligious voting was the most fruitful method of producing legislators and administrators who shared the group's cultural outlook on such issues as school attendance, foreign language instruction, prohibition, and Sunday observance. "To win the allegiance of men," Wilson McWilliams has concluded, "it is necessary to prove understanding of what they see as their private emotional and material needs. All political parties, whatever their dedication to programs and the 'government of laws,' include an assurance to their voters of a 'government of men' who will understand the problems of the individual and who can be allowed safely to act for him. Men, in other words, vote for others who are in some sense 'like themselves.'"¹⁹

Quickly the two major parties came to reflect these ethnocultural differences. The Whigs, and later the Republicans, were originally dominated by British-American Protestants who combined the crusade against slavery with a determination to use government to promote both economic expansion and public morality. They absorbed much of the nativist Know Nothing movement, as well as the bulk of the British, Scandinavian, and German Protestants who shared the Party's outlook. Catholic and Orthodox immigrant groups, and many German Lutherans, were attracted to the Democrats, the party with a tradition of antistatism and a "live and let live" attitude toward personal behavior. Not even the issue of slavery wrenched most of the latter from their Democratic moorings. These divisions persisted through the 1890's, becoming more intense whenever the Republicans at the state or local level raised ethnocultural issues. The Democrats' nomination of William Jennings Bryan in 1896 and 1900 caused significant Catholic desertions, but had much less lasting impact on the state and local levels.²⁰

The New Immigrants who began arriving at that point were almost all Catholic, Orthodox, or Jewish, but astute Republicans wooed them on economic interests and ignored ethnocultural issues. The Irish and Germans who largely controlled Democratic party machinery at the state and local levels also proved reluctant to share power and benefits with New Immigrant politicians, forcing them to flirt with the Republicans. The Progressive Era also saw the rise of much more issue- and class-oriented politics which often cut across ethnocultural lines, but which never succeeded in entirely displacing

them. Progressive Republicans attracted ethnic voters only in so far as they downplayed cultural issues and spoke to working and lower middle class economic interests. Republican reformers usually remained suspect in the eyes of Catholic or Orthodox voters, and the Democrats frequently could deliver less on socioeconomic issues and still hold the bulk of ethnic voters. Conservative Republicans often enjoyed success by combining a liberal, cultural outlook with "full dinner pail" economic appeals. The reintroduction of culturally charged issues easily undid any gains made by class or ideologically oriented politics.²¹

The fantastic pace of urbanization added yet another dimension to the nation's problems. Population increases, coupled with transportation advances, transformed the "walking city" of five to eight square miles into a metropolis of twenty to fifty square miles. Rapid growth mandated a seemingly insatiable demand for transportation, communication, water, sanitation, fire and police protection, education, and recreation facilities. The potential profits inherent in supplying these needs guaranteed a whole host of entrepreneurs eager to undertake the task, but there were many obstacles. The job of mediating among disparate geographic, socioeconomic, and ethnic groups in the city was staggering; urban government was so fragmented that it lacked the power to authorize the needed work. Concerted municipal action was severely hampered by the all-pervasive commitment to "privatism," the conviction that urban form and economic allocations should be determined primarily by private enterprise. State legislatures, usually controlled by suspicious ruralities, exercised an almost paralyzing degree of control over urban affairs. Most state legislatures retained the power to levy taxes, grant franchises, fix rates of service, and remove city officials. The city, in the words of Tammany Hall's George Washington Plunkitt, was "pie for the hayseeds."²²

Out of this welter of confusion arose the professional politician—the boss and the urban political machine. "Only a universal payment of benefits—a giant 'pay-off'—could pull the city together in a common effort," Seymour Mandelbaum has concluded. The boss and his lieutenants set up an extralegal but highly centralized system of parallel government that performed a myriad of services for a diverse constituency. By integrating political power, the machine was able to coordinate the activities of the atomized agencies of urban government and obtain the franchises and revenue required to construct the necessary facilities. Those engaged in more questionable enterprises, such as liquor sales, prostitution, and gambling, were similarly dependent upon the organization for protection. The kickbacks provided by grateful entrepreneurs provided the financial resources to reward the politicians and to supply other services to the urban lower classes.²³

As the "first social welfare agency," the political machine supplied the poor with jobs, clothing, rent, fuel and other forms of material benefits that

the economic system proved unable or unwilling to supply. The machine provided highly localized and personalized government capable of cutting through the bewildering governmental maze to provide licenses, permits, or writs. It served as a career ladder for ambitious and capable young men; "recognition politics" also fostered "group patronage," giving ethnic compatriots greater visibility, enhanced prestige, renewed self-respect, and an influential friend at court. The machine provided much of the social life of the community and undertook the tasks of naturalization of immigrants and voter registration. In a society which officially left the assimilation of millions of newcomers to chance, the machine politician, in the view of contemporary political scientist Henry Jones Ford, was "probably the secret of the powerful solvent influence which American civilization exerts upon the enormous deposits of alien populations thrown upon this country by the torrent of emigration." The urban masses responded by supplying the professional politicians with the mass base they needed to govern.²⁴

A growing segment of modern scholars has concluded that the urban political machine performed a large number of necessary services more efficiently than any existing alternative, at a cost that, even allowing for the attendant graft, was not exorbitant. Many contemporaries did not concur. Businessmen came to regard the political machine as inefficient, unpredictable, and extravagant. The rapidly mounting public debt convinced many taxpayers that reform was necessary. Open corruption and defense of vice offended moral sensibilities. Rural Americans, conveniently forgetting that they had their own "court-house gangs," regarded the machine as antidemocratic. Many native born Americans saw in it a vehicle for augmenting the political power of the foreign born. For these groups the boss and the machine became, like the trust and the saloon, a symbol of the decay of American institutions and values.²⁵

Urbanization further polarized the city and the countryside. At least since the days of Jefferson, rural Americans had regarded the city as a threat to the virtuous life. The free and easy atmosphere offended moralistic ideals. The city was also the home of corporations that threatened the well-being of the farmer and the small town merchant. Since the great bulk of the urban population was of foreign stock, the country people's fear of alien culture reinforced their distrust of city life. As the nation grew steadily more urbanized, country folk grew more defensive, seeking to uphold their religious and economic values and to strengthen their control over urban affairs. City dwellers, for their part, strove for greater freedom from restrictions imposed by the state legislature, but rural people found a potent weapon in legislative apportionment. This position brought them increasingly into an alliance with big business, cemented by mutual distrust of the urban masses, animating the Brayton machine in Rhode Island, the Roraback combine in Connecticut,

the Platt organization in New York, and the Martin-Flood-Byrd group in Virginia. Mutual fear of the city, as Elmer Cornwell has concluded, brought together "business interests and rural Yankees" in a union for "cultural-religious, as well as political and perhaps at times economic, self-protection."²⁶

The United States entered the twentieth century, then, sharply split along socioeconomic, geographical, and ethnoreligious lines. The multiplicity of divisions along economic lines almost defies enumeration—labor versus management, producers versus consumers, farmers versus business, skilled versus unskilled labor. Even business, long regarded as a monolith by most observers, was split along urban-rural and regional lines, by the size of the enterprise, and by competing functions—shippers versus transportation, exporters versus importers and financiers versus industrialists. Superimposed upon these were such cultural divisions as Protestants versus Catholics, native born versus foreign stock, white versus black, and such geographic splits as urban versus rural and section versus section. The sharpness of these divisions heightened the sense of internal solidarity within socioeconomic, ethnoreligious, or geographic groups and intensified their members' feeling of separation from the rest of society.²⁷

Yet industrialization and urbanization also unleashed forces of cohesion. "The Polish slag worker, the Boston sales girl and the Oshkosh lawyer," Walter Weyl observed in 1913, "have a similar interest (and a common cause of discontent) as consumers of national wealth." Nearly every taxpayer reacted indignantly at revelations of tax avoidance by the rich. All, too, breathed the same air, drank the same water and had a mutual concern to maintain a healthy environment. Sectionalism was a divisive force nationally, but internally Southerners and Westerners of all backgrounds shared regional pride and common enemies. Most citizens desired a government that was run as honestly, efficiently, and economically as possible. Transportation and communications were breaking down geographical and ethnoreligious boundaries, shrinking time and distance, and producing a more homogeneous society. The older primary relationships based upon "blood, land and belief" were under severe pressure from secondary relationships based upon "the functional necessities of technological industrialism." Much of society was moving from traditional authority to bureaucratic, from primordial drives to contractual arrangements, and from folkways to urban rules and regulations.²⁸

In his provocative *The New Citizenship*, David P. Thelen has argued that most of the reform achievements in Wisconsin resulted from the efforts of a broad spectrum of people who realized that their common roles as citizens, taxpayers, and consumers were more important than their narrower economic, geographic, or ethnic interests. He demonstrates how revelations of corporate arrogance, political corruption, tax avoidance, and other social ills

heightened this sense of community and spawned broadly based reform coalitions. "The basic riddle in progressivism," he asserts, "is not what drove groups apart, but what made them seek common cause." Others have echoed this theme. Carl Chrislock attributed the reform impulse in Minnesota to the widely felt notions of "idealistic discontent" and "regional injury," and Sheldon Hackney found a "genuine public spirit" animating nearly every reform group in Alabama. Still, Thelen and the others overestimate the cohesion and duration of reform coalitions. Their citizens, taxpayers, and consumers also remained members of a particular economic class or ethnic group and residents of specific locale. Certain issues, such as the income tax and utilities regulation, undoubtedly transcended those provincial barriers, but prohibition, legislative apportionment, and the recognition of labor made people acutely aware of their more parochial interests. The broader reform coalitions of citizens, taxpayers, and consumers disintegrated and regrouped along class, geographic, and ethnoreligious lines. Even in Thelen's Wisconsin, issue-oriented voting never displaced ethnoreligious and partisan political behavior during the era.²⁹

The people of the Progressive Era were pushed and pulled by a bewildering variety of forces. Each person was a complex of competing primary relationships and each of those in turn often conflicted with secondary roles. These "overlapping memberships" created tensions which few ever completely eliminated. Desire for better wages or working conditions pulled pietistic and ritualistic workers together, but Sunday blue laws drove them apart. The urban, middle and working classes both wanted more legislative representation, better social services, and increased taxation of the rich, but proposals to close saloons, eliminate patronage, or institute civil service set many of them at odds. As a consumer, one might share a desire to hold down prices but as a worker demand higher wages. A Southerner might advocate a "tariff for revenue only" but, as a sugar planter, seek protection from Cuban competition. As Chrislock found in Minnesota, broader social concerns and public spiritedness "contained—but did not overcome—the tensions which stood between grain dealer and farmer, employer and worker, Main street and the open countryside and less visibly between native American and recent immigrant." The people of the Progressive Era were no more of one piece than human beings of any other time. They remained a dynamic mixture of the broad and the narrow, of altruism and self-interest, of tolerance and parochialism and they responded to the issues of the day in just such an unsolved fashion. Reform proposals confronted the whole individual, not just "economic" or "political" man. They forced each person to a "consolidation of reference," a decision about which affiliation he prized most.³⁰

Progressive Era Americans responded to this complex, volatile world by organizing. Big business had demonstrated the benefits of scale, and the

lesson applied whether one was advancing his self-interest, protecting his cultural heritage, or aiding the underprivileged. Workers joined unions and farmers and consumers formed cooperatives. Small businessmen developed trade associations to derive the benefits of volume purchasing and marketing without surrendering their independence. Professionals formed associations to guarantee a monopoly of skills, to monitor standards of practice, and to control entry. Immigrant groups looked to their national societies for social, cultural, and recreational opportunities as well as for life insurance, sick and death benefits, burial plots, credit unions, employment agencies, hospitals, orphanages, retirement homes, and consumer cooperatives. Millions of unskilled industrial and agricultural workers remained without any form of economic organization and had to rely upon churches, humanitarian groups, and politicians to promote their interests.³¹

Ethnoreligious groups also organized to defend their cultural heritage. The national associations turned increasing attention to those issues, establishing such agencies as the B'nai Brith or the Knights of Columbus. In Chicago the threat of prohibition and Sunday blue laws led Anton Cermak, a Czech immigrant, to found the United Societies for Local Self-Government, a coalition of over 1,000 national societies with a membership of over 250,000. Black leaders joined sympathetic whites in the Urban League and the N.A.A.C.P. Native white Americans, fearful of the nation's growing heterogeneity, responded by the formation of the American Protective Association and the Immigration Restriction League. The Anti-Saloon League and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the self-styled "Protestant Church in action," worked to impose nationwide prohibition.³²

Other organizations, peopled primarily by the more comfortable elements in society, professed concern for the plight of others less fortunate. They possessed the leisure, financial security, and education to take a broader social view, and the insight to see that ameliorative action was necessary to prevent social ferment. Many also embraced such activity to find personal fulfillment or to resolve guilt or anxiety. Middle class Protestants responded to the message of the social gospel that it is the "duty of all Christian people to concern themselves directly with certain practical industrial problems." Comfortable Americans of both sexes established settlement houses among the urban poor to minister to their physical needs and ease the process of assimilation. The City Beautiful Movement and the North American Civic League attracted citizens desirous of improving the business and esthetic climate. Thousands joined the Citizens Union, the National Child Labor Committee, the Women's Trade Union League, the American Association for Labor Legislation, the National Consumers Union, and similar organizations concerned with the lot of those outside their own membership. Social worker Grace Abbott founded the Immigrants' Protective League in 1908, while

the North American Civic League for Immigrants labored to protect migrants from bankers, steamship captains, and fellow countrymen.³³

At the outset, most groups practiced "voluntarism—organized action by non-statutory institutions." Labor abided by the "pure and simple trade unionism" dictum of Samuel Gompers, preferring collective bargaining to lobbying. The National Consumers Union granted its seal to businesses that met its standards and withheld it from those that did not. The Women's Trade Union League engaged in organizing drives, joined picket lines and gave food and shelter to strikers. Business associations engaged in volume buying to cut costs, while the Immigrants' Protective League established waiting rooms, provided interpreters, found transportation and lodging, helped find relatives, and screened employment agencies, banks, and night schools. The Country Life Movement sought to make rural life more attractive, to bring to farming areas the benefits of city dwelling, and to halt the downturn in agrarian population.³⁴

Whatever success they enjoyed in the private sector, most Americans eventually turned to political action. Despite rhetoric about laissez faire, those seeking to cope with urban industrial life came to realize that only government possessed the leverage to accomplish many of their goals. If they did not become active politically their adversaries surely would. Organized labor found collective bargaining ineffectual so long as unions were judged conspiracies, yellow dog contracts and labor spies were legal, and boycotts could be halted by injunctions. By 1908 even Samuel Gompers plunged into politics to reward labor's friends and punish its enemies. Trade associations and consumer groups found fair trade laws and regulatory legislation major weapons against big business. The National Consumers League began by hoping that private means would be sufficient to reduce child labor and produce better wages and conditions, but shortly embraced political action when propaganda and negotiation were inadequate. The Country Life Movement evolved into the Country Life Commission in 1908, and agrarian groups lobbied for the county agent system and the Smith-Lever and Smith-Hughes Acts. The Women's Trade Union League found that "political action, then, was required along with trade union activities to secure better conditions, a decent wage, a limit on hours and the legal right to bargain and organize without harrassment." The Immigrants' Protective League "urged that local and national governments take over the tasks begun by private organizations like the Immigrants' Protective League." Settlement workers in New York, Boston, Chicago, and elsewhere found political action necessary because "to keep aloof from it might be to lose one opportunity of sharing the life of the neighborhood" and because "private beneficence is totally inadequate to deal with the vast numbers of the city's disinherited." Urban reform typically evolved in two stages—the first voluntary and private, the second political.

The unorganized urban masses, caught in the grip of impersonal economic forces and under increasing pressure from nativists, urged their elected representatives on to greater efforts on their behalf.³⁵

Professional politicians, whose job it was to achieve election whatever the changing climate of opinion, could hardly have ignored all of the clamor for action. Most bosses found that endorsement by organized labor paid off in votes. Charles F. Murphy, the boss of the New York City Democracy, suffered a serious defeat at the hands of the Municipal Ownership League in 1905. The following year he embraced the League's platform and its candidate, William Randolph Hearst, and recouped most of his losses. Boss Murphy also learned that support for the welfare measures being pushed by social workers Frances Perkins and Belle Moskowitz was politically beneficial. Contacts with Perkins, Moskowitz, and Mary Dreier of the Women's Trade Union League helped turn Murphy's two most illustrious protégés, Al Smith and Robert Wagner, Sr., into sponsors of New York's trail-blazing labor and welfare legislation. Under the tutelage of settlement workers Robert Woods and Mary Simkhovitch, Boston's Ninth Ward Democratic boss "Smiling Jim" Donovan backed concrete efforts to improve living and working conditions. In New Jersey, thanks to the efforts of the New Idea Republicans, "progressive issues were becoming so popular that politicians of both parties ignored them only at their peril." "The mistake that is too often made is in assuming that the boss, because he has an unsavory reputation politically, has ceased to be a human being," housing reformer Lawrence Veiller insisted, and "in assuming that you cannot count upon his help in the particular reforms in which you were interested. The direct opposite is usually the case." Political bosses had to serve as brokers for a wide variety of urban interests to hold power and the majority remained in control throughout the Progressive Era, despite the anti-machine rhetoric. Robert LaFollette, Albert Cummins, and Coe Crawford turned to reform after party regulars had prevented their tries for higher office, while many younger politicians within the urban political machine "had vague ambitions that somehow they might make a name for themselves by helping those who had elected them."³⁶

In a larger sense, Americans turned to politics because it was the only forum the nation possessed for ameliorating the conditions wrought by industrialization, immigration, and urbanization and for accommodating the competing demands of various economic, ethnic and geographic groups. The great corporations assumed no social responsibility; "welfare capitalism" was not even a slogan in 1900. There was no natural aristocracy, imbued with a tradition of noblesse oblige, to guard the welfare of the dispossessed. There were no guilds to moderate the pace of change. There was no common cultural or religious framework within which rights and obligations could be clearly assigned and antisocial conduct condemned. The nation's religious

and educational institutions were too diverse and localized to have any real impact, except in isolated areas. In a highly competitive society there was no real sense of community to sustain concern for the less fortunate. For better or worse, only politics provided an arena where conflicting groups could face each other under established ground rules and attempt to resolve their differences. The political system, alone of America's institutions, was based upon the existence of pluralism and diversity; it was constructed by compromise and specially designed to provide a means of accommodating conflicting interests. Politics allowed geographic, socioeconomic, and ethnoreligious groups to cooperate effectively on concrete reforms without losing their separate identities. Such a system clearly limited the degree of reform that was possible, but it did provide a constructive outlet for frustrations and the best means available of effectuating measurable gains. By the same token, it also held one's opponents to the same limitations, thus helping to equalize what were otherwise potentially unfair contests. "Politics was, however short of the ideal," Wilson McWilliams has argued, "a means by which men could be shaped by institutions and changes in their environment so that their lower drives would impel them toward the good end." For all their trimming and compromising, most politicians practiced the "ethics of responsibility," eschewing both ideological fanaticism and sheer opportunism.³⁷

This entry into politics of so many new and diverse elements greatly accelerated the need for compromise, cooperation, and coalition. Politicians and parties had to appeal to a wide range of interests in order to achieve and hold power. To survive they had to stake out positions which met, at least partially, the needs of a large number of factions. To achieve passage, a piece of legislation had to be constructed broadly enough to advance the goals of several segments of society. Often a proposal might be desired or opposed by different groups for different reasons. A child labor law might appeal to intellectuals and social workers on humanitarian grounds; to organized labor because it limited the work force, and to the urban working class as a protection for their own children. By the same token, it might be opposed by businessmen for selfish reasons and by some working class families as the removal of a very necessary source of income. Rhode Island's labor unions and Protestant ministers both backed a "one day's rest in seven measure," the former to limit the work week and the latter to keep holy the Sabbath. Social workers and independents promoted welfare legislation to break the hold of ward heelers over the urban poor, while astute bosses backed it to strengthen their control and shift the burden onto the public treasury. Organized labor favored immigration restriction to uphold American wage scales, social workers because they wanted to minister better to those already here, and nativists out of a concern for "the Great Race." Machine politicians opposed restriction because it would dry up the source of new voters, businessmen because it

would do the same to cheap labor. Immigrant groups did so out of ethnic pride and cultural liberals out of belief in an open society. Prohibition served the varied needs of nativists, racists, political reformers, superpatriots, advocates of industrial efficiency, social uplifters, and some unionists.³⁸

Overwhelming evidence of coalition politics has been uncovered by those who have concentrated upon the enactment of a specific proposal or upon the reformist activity of a particular locale. The Tariff Commission took shape out of the interaction of the National Grange, the Farmer's National Congress, the A.F.L., the Merchant Association of New York, and the Massachusetts Board of Trade. Utilities regulation in Milwaukee came at the behest of the Merchants and Manufacturers Association, the Chamber of Commerce, the city's unions, the Federated Trade Council, the Municipal League, the Republican Club, the Democratic Jefferson Club, Socialists, Populists, and the German Turn Verein. The initiative and referendum in Missouri was endorsed by such diverse groups as the American Federation of Labor, the Single Tax League, and the Socialist Labor, Populist, Prohibition and Democratic Parties. New York's model Triangle factory legislation was devised by a commission consisting of machine politicians Al Smith and Robert Wagner, social worker Mary Dreier of the W.T.U.L., upstate Republican legislators, labor leader Samuel Gompers, and some prominent businessmen. Child labor legislation in the South usually engaged the cooperation of professional educators, women's clubs, Protestant clergy, and state Federations of Labor against the recalcitrant mill operators. The examples could be multiplied endlessly but those presented seem sufficient to establish that an issue by issue investigation of progressive reform is almost certain to produce irrefutable evidence of coalition politics.³⁹

Similarly the important state and urban studies that have appeared in recent years have revealed that the reform impulse was widely disseminated throughout society. In Minnesota it touched small town merchants, the urban middle class, organized labor, iron miners, Socialists, and Non-Partisan League farmers. The specific provisions of Alabama's Progressive Era constitution were the result of the interaction of planters, populists, businessmen, and the urban middle class. Studies of reform in Detroit, Cincinnati, and Baltimore have all shown cooperation between professionals, businessmen, professional politicians, workers, and urban ethnic groups. Reform in Massachusetts and New York depended largely upon collaboration on specific issues, between organized labor and the representatives of the urban middle and lower classes. Reform in Kansas consisted of several "movements" each with different leaders and, to a lesser extent, with different constituencies. The celebrated progressive Republicans there interacted with Democrats, regular Republicans, and Socialists in shaping legislation. In California the word "progressivism" was used to justify everything from governmental efficiency to social

democracy. In Wisconsin "the progressive coalition" united workers and businessmen, immigrants and natives, Populists and Republicans, "wets" and "drys" and Catholics and Protestants. The most consistent electoral support for progressive Republican candidates came from a combination of Scandinavian farmers and German workers.⁴⁰

That coalition politics of this sort was unstable and difficult to fit into any meaningful pattern goes almost without saying. At best the various participants shared only a few very general convictions—that America's problems and their own were capable of solution (or at least amelioration), that political action provided a highly viable means of accomplishing those ends, and that government at all levels had a responsibility to promote human welfare. Each viewed himself as representing "the people," and his opponents on any given issue as "the interests." Each reformer believed that his cause was a "progressive reform" and couched his appeals in that rhetoric, thus seeking to construct lines of communication, establish his credentials, and convince doubters. Allies on economic matters might become enemies on cultural questions and vice versa. The coalition that demanded workmen's compensation was hardly likely to be the one pushing prohibition. Temporary allies disagreed on the specific details of a piece of legislation, forcing the need for compromise. Professional politicians frequently were converted from opposition to support, once a measure's popularity was demonstrated. If passage seemed inevitable, a proposal's opponents usually sought to riddle it with weakening amendments. These "overlapping or cross-cutting cleavages" prevented the triumph of either a single "Progressive Party" or the formation of a unified progressive program. Coalition and compromise were the absolutely indispensable conditions for the passage of any substantive legislation.⁴¹

What stability there was in this highly volatile process emerged because reasonably stable coalitions developed around broad categories of issues. Allowing for variations in time and place and the specifics of individual proposals, it is possible to discern fairly consistent patterns of support and opposition around the general categories of welfare legislation, recognition of organized labor, taxation, business regulation, political restructuring, and cultural conformity. Although it is premature to attempt any definitive grouping, the existing evidence supports some tentative generalizations about these alignments.

The launching of the welfare state in the form of workmen's compensation, old age pensions, factory codes, housing regulations, standards for child and female labor, and the like was primarily the work of three segments of society. The first was a sizeable portion of the native middle class, particularly social scientists, clergymen, social workers, artists, and intellectuals. Their training and occupational experiences made them acutely aware of the

existence of social evils. What percentage of the native middle class was so disposed and precisely what differentiated them from the rest of that class are still subjects for research. These reformers formed the social justice organizations, sought to educate other comfortable Americans to the need for public action, drafted legislation, and lobbied for its passage. Many became advisers to influential politicians and served on newly created welfare agencies.

Joining them often was organized labor, although the leaders were not all of one mind about welfare legislation either. Samuel Gompers and many of his associates feared government intervention and preferred collective bargaining to establish standards of labor, feeling that the legal minimums would ipso facto become the going rates. They were not the entire labor movement, though, and the A.F.L. was a federation. State and local affiliates, especially those in the most populous states, and non-A.F.L. unions generally took a more favorable attitude, exerting pressure on the national organization to follow suit. So too did the growing number of Socialists and such radical labor groups as the Industrial Workers of the World. By 1915 there was a debate on the floor of the national A.F.L. convention between the followers of Gompers and those of William Green of Ohio who, as a state senator, had sponsored a variety of welfare measures. As a rule organized labor favored government programs for women, children, and the unorganized, while preferring that unions rely primarily on collective bargaining. Pragmatically, unions supported government intervention where they were weak and opposed it where they were strong.⁴²

The third, and numerically largest, group in the pro-welfare coalition was the great mass of urban industrial workers who stood to benefit most by ameliorative legislation. They had come from a European tradition where government, guilds, churches, and landlords had assumed some responsibility for the welfare of the less fortunate. Italy had 6725 mutual aid societies by 1895, as well as thousands of labor chambers and credit and consumer cooperatives to help workers provide for their security. They continued the practice in the United States. Wisconsin Germans responded favorably to welfare laws similar to those in the Old Country. Foreign language newspapers, especially in the Far West, often bordered on socialism in their outlook. Most immigrants had also experienced first-hand the horrors of the sweatshop and the tenement and had survived them largely through the ministrations of priests, politicians, social workers, and fraternal societies. "The evidence suggests," as Herbert Gutman has pointed out, "that awareness of poverty did not await its discovery by sensitive members of the middle and upper classes." Unorganized economically, urban immigrants possessed considerable political leverage because political machines depended upon them for support. One recent scholar has even suggested that municipal reformers rarely concerned themselves with providing services to the lower classes, unless the latter's

representatives infiltrated their organizations. The most important steps in the adoption of welfare legislation generally came in such key industrial states as New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois, and Massachusetts at a time when the representatives of urban political machines were clearly in charge. In many cases, the more sophisticated elements in the business community sought to blunt the impact of welfare legislation by designing their own measures and forcing a compromise. The vast majority of small businesses, however, remained adamantly opposed. The interaction of these groups on behalf of welfare legislation fully justifies the conclusion of June Axinn and Herman Levin that "the reform activities of the Progressive Era were spearheaded by many groups, some working cooperatively as particular issues warranted cooperation, some working for individual aggrandizement, some working altruistically for the larger society."⁴³

The same three groups generally shared the most earnest desire for the recognition of organized labor, although the middle class contingent was significantly smaller. Welfare measures involved a kind of paternalistic concern for the less fortunate; unions opened the possibility that the lower classes could achieve enough power to plot their own destiny. Still, many native middle class reformers did battle for labor in the difficult days of its infancy. Social worker Graham Taylor judged unions "the most practical bond of brotherhood next to the Christian Church," while Jane Addams insisted that unions were "the first real lesson of self-government—for the union alone has appealed to their necessities." Settlement workers usually hired only union labor, provided strikers with food and shelter, organized mass support for strikers, and often joined picket lines themselves. "At Hull-House," Alice Hamilton confessed, "one got into the labor movement as a matter of course, without realizing how or when." All factions of labor itself were, by definition, in favor of union recognition.

The urban political machines and their predominantly working class constituencies were again the most politically effective segment of the prolabor coalition. Most urban machine spokesmen had working class backgrounds themselves and many union officials ran for the city council and state legislature with organization backing. Urban representatives who were attorneys often got their start as labor lawyers. The leadership and membership of the nation's unions was largely drawn from the same ethnic stocks as were the representatives and constituents of the political machine. By 1911 the New York Federation of Labor was heading its honor roll with such Tammany politicians as Smith and Wagner, while Boston's ward bosses agreed that "any hint from organized labor was enough to cause an order requiring action." Together with sympathetic members of the old stock, middle class, machine politicians and organized labor sought to outlaw blacklists and yellow dog contracts, to provide for jury trials for violation of injunctions,

that the war because the existing structure of customs duties. Revelations that the rich avoided taxes, aroused most segments of society to demand governmental expenditures, increased the rising cost of living and increased governmental expenditures, aroused most segments of society to demand tariff revision and income and inheritance taxes. Under the general slogan of taxes based upon "the ability to pay," many diverse groups agreed on the broad outlines of the change, while differing on the specifics. The urban middle class paid most of the property tax, consumed the lion's share of goods, and demanded better public services. They had the expertise and the erudition to popularize the need for change through tax reform associations. Farm spokesmen saw great advantages in shifting the burden from tangible property to intangible. The urban working class was also eager for better social services and happy to tax the rich. Professional politicians were anxious to supplement their extralegal sources of revenue, such as kickbacks, protection money, and assessment of payrollers, by more lucrative and predictable means. "The parties' assessment of job-holders and political candidates, the political levies against corporations and certain criminal businesses on the basis of their ability to pay," C.K. Yearley has concluded, "in effect, have been formally incorporated into state income taxes or into a variety of special taxes." On the state level, tax struggles often took on an urban-rural cast, as the cities sought to stop the flow of money to the state capitol and increase their ability to tap their own wealth. On the national level, Southerners and Westerners were motivated by sectional feelings against the Northeast, even though the former wanted a "tariff for revenue only" and the latter a more equitable system of protection. The opposition to these changes was centered primarily in the 3 percent of upper income receivers who benefited by continuation of the existing tax structure; their ability to postpone and emasculate the new one is evidence of their political influence. The rich were often successful in obfuscating the issues by appeals

to sectionalism and states' rights, by stigmatizing tax reformers as wild-eyed radicals, and by introducing such divisive issues as federal taxation of state and municipal bonds. Nearly every influential business journal in the nation was against the federal income tax, and business spokesmen who appeared before Congress were almost unanimous in their denunciation of both the tax and the Underwood tariff.⁴⁵

The regulation of business is much more difficult to unscramble. Virtually every politically active group in the nation favored some form of regulation. Agrarian demands dated back to the Grangers and the Populists, while small town merchants and bankers had an equally important stake in controlling the activities of those on whom they were dependent for transportation, financing, and processing. The urban middle class also favored regulation as part of its demand for adequate transportation and communication facilities and its desire to break up the graft-ridden connection between franchise holders and the political machine. The foreign stock working class in the nation's largest cities also pressed for better products and services at lower rates. Even big business developed a yen for regulation, especially by the federal government, in order to rationalize the system, and to eliminate uncertainty, competition, and the threat of state regulation. The federal regulatory legislation of the Wilson years may have been heavily influenced by those views, but pressures from other segments of the economy produced important compromises. State and local regulatory reformers, as Robert LaForte has observed, could hardly have desired to nationalize markets. All of these groups disagreed over the issue of public ownership, regulation, or trust-busting as well as over specific provisions. The importance of any one social segment to the regulatory coalition varied over time and place. Regulatory laws had to result from the interaction of several or all of these groups, with business often diluting the provisions and infiltrating whatever commissions were established. James L. Anderson, in his well-balanced study of the modern regulatory state, lists at least seven different groups and motives which interacted.⁴⁶

Patterns of political reform coalitions are particularly difficult to discern because the measures being proposed did not all go in the same direction. Moreover, virtually everyone used such reforms as "instruments of political warfare," hoping that new devices would help outmaneuver opponents. Many proposals designed to free cities from the domination of rural legislators provoked a fairly clear split between the metropolis and the countryside, but small town business alliances often operated to defend the political status quo. These same social and business elites, joined by a large portion of the native middle class, consistently sponsored "structural reforms"—civil service, at-large and nonpartisan elections, city manager and commission forms of government—which were intended to vest political power in experts free from

popular control. Although couched in democratic rhetoric, these proposals sought to centralize the method of decision-making, leaving out "undesirable elements" of the population. The rosters of the Civic Clubs, Voters Leagues, and Good Government Associations read like the city's social and financial registers. They believed that "a city is a business corporation," and aimed for a government that "gives us our money's worth." Referenda on structural reform issues almost always resulted in heavy support in upper class areas and overwhelming opposition in working class districts, with the middle class neighborhoods holding the balance. The enactment of structural reforms usually altered the makeup of city councils, replacing lower and lower middle class aldermen with professionals and businessmen. Statewide, such measures generally received the added support of rural and small town lawmakers.⁴⁷

It is difficult to believe that the same groups who sponsored these structural measures could also have favored the period's celebrated democratic reforms, such as direct legislation, primaries, direct election of senators, reapportionment, and woman suffrage. Many elitists favored woman suffrage in order to enfranchise upper and middle class, native, white women as a further bulwark against lower class power, but many of the most prominent opponents of woman suffrage feared the threat of working class women. Many foreign stock people were actively hostile toward woman suffrage on cultural grounds, but a large portion changed their position in time to support the nineteenth amendment, due partly to a moderation of position by the suffragists. The other democratic reforms split the middle class into those who trusted in the ultimate good judgment of the lower classes, or in their own ability to channel it, and those who did not. The urban working class had a clear self-interest in joining this coalition, one which their political mentors were at first slow to recognize but then strongly advanced. Direct legislation and primaries required the gathering of signatures, and the urban machines were better equipped than anyone to do that. Pressed by precinct and block captains, their constituents could be turned out in greater numbers at primaries than could rural or independent voters. Direct election of senators enhanced the chance of electing urban candidates. Organized labor also generally supported democratic reform, calculating that it would augment the working class voice in government. In the South, small farmer groups, such as the National Farmers Union, backed certain democratic reforms as a device against Bourbon rule, but opposed others out of dislike of the city.⁴⁸

The alignment on cultural issues was primarily an ethnoreligious one. Protestant Americans, whether in the city or the countryside, were the main advocates of prohibition, Sunday blue laws, immigration restriction, and drives against gambling and prostitution. Protestantism had freed the slaves and animated the social gospel, but it contained a darker side. Faced with the

challenge of industrialization, urbanization and immigration, many native, Protestant Americans responded with campaigns to improve individual morality, rather than by confronting broader social issues. For them the saloon, the gambler, the prostitute, and the foreigner replaced the sweatshop, the tenement, the trust, and the political machine as symbols of evil. It was that same outlook that caused Madison Grant to see in the New Immigrant and the black man a common threat to the "Great Race," causing many Northerners to sympathize with the South's solutions of segregation and disfranchisement. Prohibition was largely an anti-immigrant movement in the North and an anti-Negro one in the South. In Oklahoma and the West, it was often aimed at the "red man" as well. Immigration restriction and forced Americanization were sponsored by a coalition of social workers, educators, superpatriots, and businessmen.⁴⁹

The coalitions which consistently opposed these efforts were a combination of the most traditional and liberal elements in society. The newer immigrant stocks, working with urban machine politicians, formed the largest segment of the coalition; their newspapers were at one in their denunciations of threats to personal liberty. In her detailed study of the antiprohibition coalition, Nuala Drescher has concluded that its largest numerical segment consisted of urban ethnic groups. Southern blacks were disfranchised first and then segregated and "reformed," so that they were able to offer absolutely no resistance. Many business leaders stood with the ethnic minorities on these issues because they saw the drives at liquor, gambling, and prostitution as illegal confiscations of property, and viewed free immigration as a guarantee of cheap labor. Other businessmen, though, were enamored of prohibition on the grounds of industrial efficiency, and of immigration restriction when there was a surplus of unskilled labor. At the other end of the political spectrum were those academics and professionals whom education and experience had turned into hedonists or cultural liberals, uprooting them from the moralistic moorings of their youth. Although the national A.F.L. did not openly condemn prohibition until 1919, only 12 of its 186 city labor councils, 5 of its 46 state federations and 19 of its 111 craft unions ever endorsed the idea.⁵⁰

The evidence of referenda and legislative roll calls on cultural issues during the Progressive Era clearly mirrored these cultural divisions. In nearly all cases they featured the upper and lower classes of the cities and some cultural liberals against the urban middle class and the rural areas. In most cases these alignments cut across the socioeconomic and political reform coalitions that had been building and were a major factor in curtailing their effectiveness. A 1911 prohibition vote in the California senate split the normal reform coalition asunder, throwing many urban-labor-immigrant reformers into alliance with acknowledged probusiness conservatives. The coalitions which defeated

an antisaloon ordinance in Boston the same year consisted of the Back Bay and the Irish, Italian, Jewish, and black wards, predominating over the middle class sections of the city. In a Chicago referendum on prohibition, nearly all of the city's immigrant groups voted more than 80 percent against the measure, with only native Protestants, Swedes, and some blacks showing any real support. In the Illinois legislature in 1917, only seventeen old stock lawmakers from among Chicago's seventy-four representatives favored the bill. Legislators from the heavily old stock Protestant, downstate area overwhelmingly favored the measure, but of the forty-one negative votes from non-Chicago lawmakers twenty-nine were cast by Irish or German-Americans, most of whom were Catholics. The only Congressmen willing to stand against the final votes on prohibition and the literacy test for immigrants were those with heavily new stock constituencies.⁵¹

It was out of their position in these various coalitions that individuals and organizations developed their reform agendas. Many eventually evolved formal programs, combining stands on several of these issues, while others simply responded to questions as they arose, leaving others to discern some meaningful patterns. Those who espoused structural political reform as a defense against the urban masses often coupled that with a proclivity for legislated cultural conformity, strongly opposed organized labor and were lukewarm, at best, toward welfare measures. Those for whom the latter were the most pressing order of business often favored the recognition of labor and democratic political proposals, while fiercely opposing cultural uplift. The possible combinations and permutations were numerous and the likelihood of deviation from the general position because of the peculiarities of a single proposal clearly increased the complexity. Measuring individual reformers and groups against their usual positions on the broad categories discussed above, though, holds out the only viable possibility for determining what kind of "progressive" they were and what implications that elusive term really had.

Individual politicians, contending factions, and political parties were thus faced with the task of constructing programs that appealed to members of several reform coalitions. Political platforms are notorious for being all things to all men, but there are certain reasonable limits. Even in the extravagant rhetoric of reform that characterized the day, it was difficult to appeal consistently to the proponents of both structural and democratic political change, to both the advocates and opponents of legislated conformity, to both the supporters and the antagonists of labor and welfare measures.

The successful candidate, faction, or party in any given locale had to develop a platform with enough internal consistency to appeal to the membership of several compatible reform coalitions. This orientation naturally served the needs of certain socioeconomic, ethnoreligious, and geographic segments better than others and allowed these groups, temporarily at least, to impose

their world view on the rest of society. Their very success, however, generally aroused those with different outlooks who intensified their political activity and constructed a competing coalition and program. Each party started with a hard core of voters committed to it through habit and ethnoreligious or sectional tradition; broadening its constituency by appealing to issue-oriented independents or party switchers ran the risk of alienating a segment of original partisans.

During the first decade of the century in Minnesota, the legislature was dominated by representatives favorable to the nonurban and urban middle classes and the state Federation of Labor, who concentrated upon a moderate program of business regulation, structural political change, and some modest welfare measures. In the second decade, the impetus swung to the grain farmers of the Non-Partisan League, iron miners, urban workers, and Socialists who pressed for a much more radical program of state ownership of grain elevators, mills, insurance companies, and banks; the recognition of organized labor; and more sweeping welfare legislation. When Wisconsin and Kansas progressive Republicans sought to move from a middle class-oriented program of regulation, taxation, and political reform to a more labor-welfare-oriented one after 1910, they suffered losses in their earlier constituency without much gain in urban, working class votes. In Colorado the Democrats rode to power largely on the votes of urban labor and miners after the progressive Republicans had assuaged middle class reform demands. In the South, the original Populist-oriented reform base typically gave way to a more urban, middle class orientation under the leadership of such men as Braxton B. Comer and Hoke Smith. In the industrial Northeast, reform centered in the urban middle class initially on a program of tax reform, business regulation, structural political change, and some moderate labor and welfare measure. By 1910 the working class allied with more advanced middle class elements, seized the initiative, and pressed for much more in the way of labor and welfare measures, greater democratization of the political process, and more effective tax and regulatory measures. Their success generally provoked reaction from the small towns and much of the urban middle and upper classes who sought to curtail labor, minimize the working class vote, and enforce conformity to native, Protestant cultural standards.⁵²

This change in constituencies and programs over time was reflected in the fortunes of political parties and factions. In the South the entire drama was played out within the Democratic Party. In the Midwest, where the Republicans had almost as much of a monopoly as the Democrats in the South, the Insurgents generally seized control in the first decade of the century, adjusting sufficiently to the changing climate to hold power throughout. In the Northeast, and to a lesser extent in the West, the two party system provided the mechanism for accommodating the competing aims of different social

groups. Native, middle class reformers generally worked through the Republicans, the party of respectability and moralism. In the main, they met with some success on the issues of taxation, regulation, and political restructuring. Their progress was limited, however, both by the strength of the rural and business interests within the party and by their own narrow social vision. The more advanced of their number, as well as the more politically realistic, recognized the need to appeal to the ethnic lower classes through moderate labor and welfare measures, democratization, and respect for cultural differences. The majority of eastern Republicans, however, leaned toward containing the urban masses politically and socioeconomically, while "uplifting" them through cultural legislation. This orientation virtually forced the urban, ethnic, lower classes into the Democratic camp, whose largely Irish leadership usually proved more flexible.⁵³

From an incredibly low ebb in 1904, the Democrats increased their percentage of the Northeast's Congressional seats by 74.6 percent in 1910 and by 54.6 percent in 1912. Beginning in Ohio in 1908, they captured governors' mansions and/or state houses in Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, and New Hampshire. Although many observers have acknowledged this significant change, they have generally judged it "an enigma." It occurred because the machine leadership of the party responded constructively to the demands of urbanites for labor and welfare laws, tax reform, democratization, utility regulation, and cultural pluralism. Sympathetic members of the middle class often joined forces with machine-based reformers, but the bulk of electoral support for Democratic resurgence was centered in urban, ethnic, working class districts; their representatives provided much of the legislative skill and voting power. In most northeastern industrial states, the high tide of reform came under Democratic rule with the backing of the urban machines. The New Idea Republicans in New Jersey gave way to the Democrats under Woodrow Wilson, whose most consistent support came from the representatives of urban, ethnic North Jersey. The groundwork laid by Charles Evans Hughes allowed the Tammany-led Democrats from 1911 to 1914 to compile a record that has never been surpassed. In Illinois the high point of reform came under Chicago Irish Democrat Edward F. Dunne, in Ohio under Democrats Judson Harmon and James Cox, in Massachusetts under Democrats Eugene Foss and David I. Walsh, all of whom had strong urban, ethnic backing for labor-welfare-oriented programs. Those middle class reformers who were sympathetic to these achievements, but who could not stomach the seamier aspects of machine cum ethnic politics turned to the abortive Progressive Party. Like their leader, most eventually drifted back to the party of their fathers, with a noticeable decline in enthusiasm for reform.⁵⁴

At times this transition in constituencies and programs was subsumed un-

der the aegis of a dynamic leader. In California, Hiram Johnson was originally elected as the candidate of the Lincoln-Roosevelt League on a platform of regulation, taxation, and structural political reform. He received his strongest electoral backing in the old stock, middle class districts of Southern California. By his second term, Johnson sensed the potential power of the new stock working class and switched to a program of labor recognition, welfare measures, and popular political reform. Although he lost much of this original electoral support, he replaced it with the urban, new stock, working class vote in northern California. By 1916, the greater the number of foreign stock voters in a district the greater the vote for Johnson. By 1920 his main support came from the San Francisco political machine, from Catholics, Jews and other ethnic groups, and from organized labor. Hazen Pingree, Tom Johnson and "Golden Rule" Jones were all elected initially as the "honesty, efficiency, and economy" candidates of businessmen and good government associations. Once in office, however, they battled the utilities and traction companies, pressed for labor and welfare measures, sought to integrate ethnic minorities into the political process, and generally ignored the fervent demands of the "better classes" to eliminate vice, liquor and gambling. All three mayors eventually lost the support of "men of property and influence," as Frederic Howe noted, but gained that of "the politicians, immigrants, workers and persons of small means." In Los Angeles, George Alexander was elected mayor in 1908 with the support of business and civic groups, carrying the city's middle and upper class wards against his Socialist opponent. He campaigned on a platform of honest business government, the protection of property and the curbing of outside corporations, but he soon shifted his emphasis to social services for the disadvantaged. In Wisconsin, progressivism was a "play in three acts," moving from struggle for control of the G.O.P. to LaFollette's program of electoral-regulatory taxation reform to McGovern's social service state by 1913.⁵⁵

It was the fragile and transitory nature of coalition politics and the difficulty of sustaining a cooperative mood among different social groups that ultimately brought an end to the Progressive Era. Although they staked out broad areas of agreement and frequently cooperated on concrete reforms, any more permanent alliance between old stock, Protestant middle class and the new stock, non-Protestant lower classes was foreclosed by a fatal inner tension. Distrust arose fundamentally because the middle class reformers were engaged in uplifting others while the lower classes were concerned with self-improvement. The middle class held up its values and lifestyles as models to be emulated, while the lower classes wished to be highly selective about what they adopted. The exact date of the rupture varied from place to place. In Minnesota it occurred early. The tension between the state's economic, geographic, and ethnic groups, which had been temporarily submerged by ideal-

ism and sectionalism, reemerged after 1914 to shatter the progressive coalition. The labor-welfare program of the McGovern administration in Wisconsin in 1913 failed to woo a sufficient number of ethnic working class voters away from their Democratic and Social Democratic moorings, but it alienated enough of the progressive Republicans' original rural and middle class support to elect a reactionary governor in 1914. Governor Walter Stubbs and the progressive Republicans in Kansas had almost the exact same experience, except that Stubbs himself moderated his stance to one of a business-like administrator, and held on to his office. New Jersey progressives also split between those who wanted more labor and welfare measures and those who were satisfied with the reforms of Wilson and the New Idea Republicans. Further social reforms made little headway because of the joint efforts of agrarian and business representatives. Elsewhere disintegration was triggered by the Great War.⁵⁶

The issue of American participation in the war drove deep fissures into the ranks of those who had cooperated on other issues. Even among middle class social reformers there were some, such as Jane Addams, Alice Hamilton, or Florence Kelley, who continued to protest the war, while others, such as Herbert Croly, Robert Woods, and Mary Simkhovitch, gave their support. The followers of Wilson and Roosevelt were alienated from those of Norris and LaFollette. The antiwar Germans, Irish, and Scandinavians clashed sharply with the prowar Poles, Czechs, and Slavs. Moreover, Wilson made the fatal, though understandable, mistake of couching the war in the rhetoric of progressivism. When it failed to produce a safer or more just world, the result cast doubt upon domestic reform as well. "By pinning America's role in the war so exclusively to high moral considerations and to altruism and self-sacrifice," Richard Hofstadter insisted, "by linking the foreign crusade as intimately as possible to the Progressive values and the Progressive language, he was unintentionally insuring that the reaction against Progressivism and moral idealism would be as intense as it was."⁵⁷

The greatest disillusionment came among the professionals and intellectuals who shared Wilson's aspirations. Shocked by the horrors of war and the failures of the peace conference, many of them took refuge in elitism and campaigns for personal betterment. By 1925 Walter Lippmann was deriding the notion that the "compounding of individual ignorance in masses of people can produce a continuous directing force in public office" and was calling for rule by an elite class of experts. For many like him, the war unleashed an irrational fear of radicalism and social protest. The atmosphere that had made the muckrakers' attacks seem so exhilarating disappeared under the watchful eye of George Creel's Committee on Public Information and A. Mitchell Palmer's Red Scare. Eugene Debs was thrown into federal prison, President Nicholas Murray Butler sought to gag Columbia's antiwar

faculty, and the Lusk Committee expelled several duly elected Socialist members from the New York Assembly. The Wilson administration's shoddy record on civil liberties disaffected the major libertarian organizations, further disintegrating the coalition that had upheld the New Freedom. It also alienated untold numbers of ethnic minorities who had traditionally supported the Democratic Party, laying the groundwork for the electoral disasters of 1920 and 1924.⁵⁸

More comfortable Americans also developed a growing fear of the potential economic and political power of the urban working class. Even those middle class reformers who had backed labor and welfare measures earlier harbored doubts about the goals of the labor movement. Settlement workers wanted social justice for the working class, but not at the expense of the violence and disturbance of the peace that often accompanied strikes. "It is only occasionally that I get a glimpse of the chivalry of labor," Jane Addams remarked to a friend, "so much of the time it seems so sordid." Graham Taylor insisted that "if the labor union could become more of a school, its usefulness could be vastly increased." As early as 1916, child labor law advocate Senator Albert J. Beveridge was denouncing the federal income tax and organized labor, while praising the Indianapolis Employers Association for success "in the suppression of strikes by force." The rash of strikes that followed the end of the war frightened all but the most diehard middle class supporters of unions. "Everywhere," a contemporary student of the Wilson administration's labor policies noted in 1920, "labor representatives are presenting new and greater demands and many defenders of the status quo fear the unleashing of disintegrating forces." The government's National Industrial Conference to promote business-labor cooperation in 1919 broke up in mutual animosity over compulsory arbitration, the prohibition of strikes, and other issues. The Labor Department became more involved in deporting alleged alien radicals than in promoting the interests of labor, while the Seattle *Business Chronicle* expressed a widely held view that the government should rid the nation of the "Non-Partisan League, the so-called Triple Alliance in the State of Washington, the Pro-German Socialists, the closed shop unions, the agitators, the malcontents, anarchists, Syndicalists, revolutionists, traitors, the whole motley crew of Bolsheviks and near Bolsheviks." Agrarian reformers grew similarly fearful. In 1921 Henry C. Wallace responded to Gompers' appeal for a labor-farmer coalition by asserting that "the fact is that the farmers are suffering more now from the leaders of labor than from the leaders of industry or finance," and by advising labor to reduce its "exorbitantly high wages" as "an evidence of good faith." Many middle class reformers also grew uneasy as the lower classes pressed for more sweeping welfare measures, helping to defeat the Smith Administration's proposal for public health insurance in New York in 1919.⁵⁹

Mostly, though, coalition politics perished on the shoals of cultural reform. As urban and rural old stock Protestants devoted more attention to legislated morality, the gap between them and the new stock working class grew greater. It is hard to see how anything as delicate and tentative as the reform coalitions were could have survived the superheated and acrimonious rhetoric of the debates over prohibition, immigration restriction, and Sunday blue laws. Even the National Conference of Social Work endorsed prohibition by 1917, hailing it to be the ultimate solution to poverty, prostitution, crime, and industrial inefficiency. When Congress passed the literacy test over Wilson's veto in 1917, not even the Immigrants' Protective League raised much protest. The foreign stock working class was forced into a necessary alliance with business-oriented conservatives who opposed prohibition and immigration restriction on economic grounds. Prohibition helped destroy previously effective reform coalitions in Kansas, California and Colorado, while immigration restriction and Americanization became increasingly attractive to many native middle class reformers. As did Frances Kellor, many made the journey from reformers to militant Americanizers to spokesmen for the welfare capitalism of the 1920's. Some new stock reformers became so distrustful of government intervention into their lives that they even temporarily lost their enthusiasm for welfare measures and opposed the national child labor amendment and federal aid to education in the 1920's. These cultural issues destroyed the socioeconomic and political coalitions that had been so carefully constructed in earlier years.⁶⁰

Prohibition enforcement, the Ku Klux Klan, the National Origins Quota Act, the 1924 Democratic convention, and the presidential candidacy of Al Smith made sure that effective reform coalitions were not reconstructed during the next decade. By 1928 William Allen White, the prototype of the native, middle class progressive, was denouncing Al Smith, the prototype of the urban, new stock progressive as "a representative of the saloon, prostitution and gambling," and of "a group who have back of them only physical appetite and no regard for law or reform." The fluid "cross-cutting cleavages" of earlier years hardened into rigid "non-overlapping or cumulative cleavages," across which there was little possibility for coalition or compromise. When the established members of society feel challenged, either by alien forces or by people below them in the social structure, Robert Dahl has noted, they see "themselves threatened at the foundations by the aspirations and policies of the groups whose expanding influence, if unchecked, would destroy or, at the very least seriously impair, their way of life." At that point, "they more and more perceive their opponents as implacable enemies who must be destroyed lest they be destroyers."⁶¹

The Progressive Era was a seminal period in its attempts to cope with the implications of living in an urban, industrial, multicultural society. Would-be

reformers from all walks of life advanced solutions to the nation's problems which first and foremost served the particularistic needs of their constituents. Although many sought redress through private action, nearly all eventually turned to politics. This widespread consensus that the state should actively promote social justice clearly marked the period off from earlier ones and established a precedent for future reformers. Under the pressures of politics, interest groups of all sorts were forced to compromise, coalesce, and cooperate to achieve positive legislative results. By this process they established a framework in which profound social change in a pluralistic society could be assimilated.

The very nature of that process has undoubtedly inhibited the nation's response to modernization down to the present day, by placing a premium on compromise, conciliation, and consensus. It has necessitated an emphasis on "incremental adjustments" rather than sweeping or comprehensive change, generating politicians "who learn to deal gently with opponents, who struggle endlessly in building and holding coalitions together, who doubt the possibilities of great change, who seek compromises."⁶² Whether a nation as large and diverse as the United States could have responded to the massive social changes of the late nineteenth century in any more radical manner without major alterations in its political system is certainly open to serious question. Whether any more fundamental alterations were possible in a society so socially and culturally fragmented, lacking a genuine national identity and culture, is even more questionable. Even the great crises of the past fifty years have failed to alter the process in any fundamental way. It is that process, rather than any specific reform measures, that constitutes the most important legacy of the Progressive Era.

NOTES

1. Peter Filene, "An Obituary for the 'Progressive Movement'," *American Quarterly* 22 (1970): 20-34.

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ESSAY

by Robert M. Crunden

In a provocative article published in 1970, Peter Filene presented a challenge to all future students of the Progressive Era.¹ Attempting to bring clarity and order to a topic notoriously full of conflict and confusion, he subjected the term "progressive movement" to a rigorous analysis and, after reviewing the major recent work in the field, came to the conclusion that it was not a "movement" at all, in the strict, sociological sense of the term. Progressives were not a self-conscious collective group with clearly defined membership and supporters, nor did they have consistent ultimate goals or immediate objectives. His critique of the term "movement" reveals the inadequacy of the tools of conventional historical analysis to demonstrate the existence of a coherent progressive movement in any strictly defined sense. The net result of research along these lines has instead been the description of a number of progressive movements: shifting coalitions formed to produce reforms on various issues, which conspicuously lack geographical, economic or social unity.

The second, less detailed part of Filene's argument goes still further to urge the abandonment of "progressivism" as a meaningful term for historians of the period. Conceived vaguely as a kind of "spirit of the age," it fails to offer the precision historians need to analyze specific issues. Conceived precisely, as an ideological -ism like, for example Marxism, it brings an unwarranted degree of precision into the discussion, and is invalid for the same reasons that the precise use of the word "movement" must be rejected.

Before we accept this counsel of despair and reject a term which many people in the period themselves found useful, we should ask whether or not the term "progressivism" may be redefined in such a way as to avoid these two pitfalls, and consider what kind of coherence the term can offer a person

seeking what the various progressive movements might have in common. Filene is quite right to show that "progressivism" does not have the same consistency and coherence as a carefully articulated ideology like Marxism. But historians do in fact speak meaningfully of another kind of -ism, which implies a genuine if somewhat looser coherence among shared attitudes, when they use a term like "Victorianism." Upon close examination, progressivism becomes an -ism in this second sense; it may be regarded as a "frame of mind."² Walter Houghton has distinguished between what he would call the Victorian mind—the basic ideas and cognitive propositions of the period—and the more elusive and more fundamental "frame of mind"—the basic moral and emotional attitudes, the basic frame of reference, often unspoken, which determined the fundamental habits of thought among leaders in the period, whatever their positions on specific issues. Applied to progressivism, this approach has the advantage of showing the relations among progressives in a variety of fields, who, however they might differ about a specific reform, were all attempting the moral regeneration of society.

Houghton analyzed the Victorian frame of mind in much the same fashion as the social scientist taking a public opinion poll. He tabulated the opinions of the articulate spokesmen and women of his society and period on what he believed were the key issues. He thus pinned down in a reasonably precise way what intellectual historians sometimes loosely call the spirit of the age. But his method, in the eyes of more conventional historians, was open to criticism on two grounds: it presented the ideas of people quite divorced from what they actually did, and thus seemed divorced from the normal "stuff" of history; and it created an imaginary entity, a "mind," that never really existed in any one head, and that quite possibly would not have been acceptable to any single Victorian.

Modern social science, however, has given historians at least one means of working around these criticisms and yet still defining accurately the frame of mind in a given period. To be specific, the work of Erik Erikson neither divorces ideas from events, nor postulates any imaginary construct like a general mind. In his analysis of great leaders, as in portions of *Childhood and Society* (1950), and in all of *Young Man Luther* (1958), and *Gandhi's Truth* (1969), Erikson has demonstrated suggestively how crises in childhood and youth can combine especially with religious milieus to produce effective political movements, and to create moral frames of reference in which certain values and reactions seem to be taken for granted. He has also placed his considerable prestige behind the contention that great leaders articulate and find ways of resolving the important psychological conflicts in the culture of their time. It would be an understatement to call his work "controversial" among professional historians, and I do not wish to appear in anything resembling the guise of a disciple, unquestioningly following a new methodological

master. I do think, however, that Erikson has raised many of the right questions and made suggestions that are well worth pursuing in many areas of historical research.³ The implication for the rest of this essay is that Erikson's method, used in conjunction with the cultural analysis of scholars like Walter Houghton, will help progressive historians describe what they mean by "progressivism" and do so in a way more convincing than earlier attempts.

Progressivism thus becomes a term not specifically political or social, but rather cultural. The term describes the dominant tone of the period around the turn of the twentieth century, much the way "Victorianism" usefully sums up the tone of Walter Houghton's England from 1830 to 1870. Indeed, in its strenuous moralism and declining religious faith, America in the Progressive Era often resembles England in the Victorian Era. It was not any accident that the inspiration for some Progressive Era innovations, like Hull-House, came from English institutions like Toynbee Hall, or that Victorian thinkers like John Ruskin were so important to progressive reformers. "Progressivism" was the spirit with which individuals during the period sought to resolve their psychological conflicts in socially beneficial ways. It is a word applicable to the motivation behind reform, but not necessarily to the specific shape of a given reform. A progressive, for example, could be for or against prohibition. What determined his progressiveness was his general stance toward innovation and social change, and his moral tone of voice, and not his feelings explicitly about alcohol.

Defined in this fashion, progressivism is not amenable to the usual analytical methodologies. Motivation and moral tone of voice cannot be measured by the traditional tools of quantification and political analysis: people "think" and "feel" in ways often unconnected with the way they vote. Even the straightforward biographical approach requires the assistance of careful rhetorical and psychological analysis of the written records, profiting from the example of both Erikson the psychologist and Houghton the professor of literature. Both approaches remind us that personal letters and even published works can often "mean" more than they literally "say." The core of progressivism can no more be found in political analysis alone than the core of Victorianism can be found by studying the electoral jousting of Disraeli and Gladstone. Categories appropriate for political analysis are frequently misleading when applied to areas like religion, education, or literature. To examine political behavior by itself as an index to the culture of a period is to examine a part and mistake it for the whole.

Two of the finest studies of progressivism help illustrate the problems involved with a chiefly political emphasis. Richard Hofstadter, in *The Age of Reform* (1955), and George Mowry, in *The California Progressives* (1951), studied the progressives sociologically, in terms of a social class and its political behavior. For them, progressives were essentially middle class reformers,

disturbed by the corruptions around them and frequently bothered by their own declining influence in American life. But instead of trying to define a frame of reference that involved the entire culture, Mowry and Hofstadter tried to find sociological tools and terms of separating progressives from non-progressives. Because of inadequate use of control groups, their conclusions were attacked, often savagely, by a whole generation of younger, and often lesser, scholars. The genuine insight and the sophisticated intelligence displayed in these important contributions often seemed to get lost in the quarrel about how, as it were, the sheep could be separated from the goats and accurately counted. Other critics insisted that the middle class was not the best focus at all, and that lower and upper class progressives were also important. Filene's objections to the results of these controversies are all too well taken.⁴

When historians have used other methodologies in studying progressivism, they have often been no more successful in settling the basic problems raised by the topic. The radicalism of the New Left of the 1960's, for example, influenced historians like Gabriel Kolko and James Weinstein to make analyses that are more economic than sociological. Emphasizing especially the financial interests of big businessmen, they have argued that progressivism as a reform influence was something of a fraud; the basic progressive reforms were all too often attempts by the successful to fend off meaningful reform and instead to use the appearance of reform to strengthen their own economic and political power and deflect public criticism. But to a historian wishing to understand progressivism in the cultural sense, their books are even less useful than the sociological books of Hofstadter and Mowry. A book like Kolko's *The Triumph of Conservatism* (1963), does not give even passing attention to most of the individuals commonly thought of as progressives, and finds instead a gallery of big businessmen and businesses and their relations to Congress and to Presidents Roosevelt, Taft and Wilson. Kolko feels free to devote pages to the ideas of Marx and Engels, while he ignores progressivism at the state and local political levels and seems totally ignorant of the educational, literary, and philosophical aspects of progressivism. His book, in short, is not about progressivism at all, but rather about a number of events and people who lived during the period.⁵ The same thing, for different reasons, could be said about any number of other books that relate the history of the period: they do not define or analyze progressivism at all; they either ignore it or take it for granted.

If, however, we follow Erikson's suggestions and change the focus of attention from group behavior and its quantification to individual behavior and how leaders can focus a whole nation on certain policies and goals, many of these problems and controversies seem to disappear. The key problem for progressive scholarship now becomes the study of how recognized leaders

achieved their own sense of identity, why people found them worthy of emulation, and how their personal problems became institutionalized into "progressive" schools, settlements, laws and works of art: in short, how the private problems of gifted men became public issues with political, social, economic and cultural consequences. Instead of trying to separate progressives from other Americans, we should instead ask why progressives appealed to so many Americans.

The student who does this will discover that progressivism was essentially religious. An extraordinarily large number of progressive leaders in all sections of the culture grew up in devoutly Protestant homes. A frequent and recurring pattern is that they were personally devoted to their parents and to the moral values of the home and yet unable to share their parents' certitude about many elements of the Protestant faith. The impact of Darwinism, of industrialism, of religious skepticism, of personal insecurity—these and other factors produced a group of people who had internalized Protestant moral norms, but who often could not find psychological satisfaction within the ministry, or even within religious institutions generally. A progressive was thus a person of strongly religious upbringing who displaced the moral concerns of his youth onto the very real social, industrial, political and aesthetic problems of his maturity, and who attempted to solve these public and personal problems within a Protestant, moral frame of reference. This definition in no way implies church membership, religious faith, or even belief in God. The nonbelievers among the progressives remained dominated by this Protestant morality even when they had rejected the theology, and even when they regarded themselves as being emancipated from it. A few figures like William Jennings Bryan or Woodrow Wilson retained their faith unchanged to the end. They were not necessarily typical.

Thus, Hofstadter and Mowry were quite right to find so many progressives in the middle class, but they focused on the wrong part of the reformers' lives. What was important was not the class, but the religion; a great many middle class Americans shared the Protestant moral frame of reference and used it automatically when confronted by the problems of their day. Kolko and Weinstein were perfectly right to denigrate most progressive reforms and belittle their effect on the political or economic structures of society. The progressives were seeking moral and psychological satisfactions, and the act of moral indignation, followed by public criticism and legislative activity was satisfying *in itself*, quite apart from whether it ever did any good. Progressives certainly were too easily satisfied, and too often led onto the wrong scent when they entered politics, at least by modern standards of social reform. But modern reform movements more often address the problem in its own terms, and not in terms of the psychological needs of the reformer. The New Deal provides an immediate and obvious contrast. With many Catholic,

Jewish, and agnostic leaders, the New Dealers usually tried to deal directly with social issues, were willing to experiment in many different and not specifically "moral" ways, and could not settle for reforms that merely expressed moral yearnings because the depression posed problems so great that genuine, basic issues had to be confronted.

In the pages that follow, then, I have tried to supply two specific examples of what I mean by these generalizations.⁶ I have tried to sketch in the psychologically important events in the lives of two key young progressives, in an attempt to show in microcosm how psychology can help students understand the cultural milieu of an age. Jane Addams and John Dewey are especially appropriate for study in this context because they left sufficient written records, were friends for much of the period in the same city, and were distinctly not political in the basic focus of their activity. They were not of the same sex, nor from the same part of the country, and so provide something of a check on each other in terms of larger generalizations. In addition, each of them established a well-known and influential progressive institution—Hull-House and the Dewey School—that encouraged specific reference to certain progressive reforms, and that encouraged others to engage in similar activities. Neither person in maturity regarded himself or herself as a convinced Christian, and so they are especially useful in illustrating the meaning of progressivism as being a form of displaced Protestantism.

II

Jane Addams grew up as the youngest child in a motherless family. Her father John and her elder sister Mary were the chief older figures in her life. Mary apparently was much like Jane's mother had been: selfless, affectionate and competent. But the overwhelming force in Jane's life, in her own eyes and in the eyes of most other writers on the subject, was John Addams. On the first page of chapter one of her autobiography, Jane wrote that all of her childhood memories "are directly connected with my father," he "was so distinctly the dominant influence," and the "cord which not only held fast my supreme affection, but also first drew me into the moral concerns of life." With no mother to get in the way, Jane found it possible to monopolize her father in many ways, and with far less competition within the family than would otherwise have been normal. It is a commonplace of psychological thought since Freud that children customarily develop great affection for the parent of the opposite sex, and dream of ultimately "marrying" that parent in some way. Normally, the presence of the parent of the same sex encourages a more mature attitude, and the child realizes the hopelessness of his desire and then models himself on the parent of the same sex. With Jane, the

absence of her mother delayed this process, and so she tended to be even closer to her father than would otherwise have been possible.⁷

A number of anecdotes illustrate Jane's intense devotion to her father, and her own feelings of inadequacy in trying to be worthy of such a model. John Addams, for example, had a "miller's thumb," which had been flattened by handling grain for many years; his hands also bore marks caused by the hard flints that flew off the millstones when he dressed them. Jane made a great effort to spot her own hands, and to flatten her own thumb. Perhaps somewhat more serious than this quite common imitation of an admired adult was Jane's marked inferiority complex. No one seems to have described her as an unattractive child, and yet she felt as if she were an "ugly, pigeon-toed little girl, whose crooked back obliged her to walk with her head held very much to one side. . . ." She apparently did have some slight curvature of the spine, and may have experienced some pain because of it. She also held her head slightly to one side. But only to herself, and compared to her own ideal of her father, was she unattractive. Indeed, her shame was so great that she dreaded to be seen walking next to her father in public: "I simply could not endure the thought that 'strange people' should know that my handsome father owned this homely little girl."⁸

This extraordinary attachment of Jane to her father becomes significant for the history of progressivism because of her associations of moral and religious ideas with him. Jane clearly united the figure of her father with her growing moral concerns, and internalized her perception of his attitude into her own conscience. John Addams taught a large Bible class at their church; at the same time he would never accept any denominational membership. He called himself a "Hicksite Quaker," thus vaguely identifying himself with a democratic offshoot of the older Quaker church, and incidentally a group with no meeting house nearby. In practice, John Addams irregularly attended several Protestant churches in the area and had no recognizable dogmatic beliefs. Instead, he developed a creed of his own from common Christian morals. He had great moral strength of character, courage, and kindness, and he identified these qualities with Christ. He also quietly supported his daughter when despite great pressure she refused to have a standard, evangelical conversion. Jane later remembered his comment, "mental integrity above everything else," as a kind of summation of his outlook.⁹ She thus fused her image of her father with this moralized righteousness. Like him, she too would be earnest, ethical, independent, and undogmatic, and bequeath these secularized religious characteristics to progressivism.

Jane's exclusive possession of her father ended when she was eight. John Addams married Anna Haldeman Addams, a remarkable woman of great force of character, who of necessity came immovably between Jane and John

Addams. According to Anna's granddaughter Marcet, Anna was a domineering and competitive social climber who tended to provoke strong reactions in everyone who met her. Marcet remembered her as "a fairy godmother sort of person," "so alive in every fiber that I can scarcely believe she is no longer here. She was adorable, and I worshipped her." Marcet noted further, however, that Anna could "not always control her temper." John Addams had long admired Anna from a distance, while she "admired—and respected" him. James Linn retained similar memories. He found Anna a little overbearing; even at the age of ninety-three she "was still handsome, in a terrifying sort of way." She read novels voraciously and liked to act out Shakespearean roles with the family. She also played the guitar, and enjoyed singing "endless songs from Tom Moore." She was, in short, a socialite, accomplished in a social sense, eager to entertain and travel and not entirely in agreement with her husband's more moralistic and retiring lifestyle.¹⁰

Jane apparently detested Anna, although she was usually too polite to say so. Anna never appears in Jane's autobiography, and the marriage is passed off in a subclause. An undertone of hostility is evident in all the surviving records. Jane's unique status in her father's house was permanently gone, and she not only had to share him, she had to do so with a woman with whose values she did not identify. Anna was probably right in regarding Jane as too shy and retiring, but her subsequent efforts to force Jane into athletics and a whole round of social engagements could hardly have endeared her to her step-daughter. Because of Anna, Jane acquired a number of social graces that people later admired at Hull-House. More significantly for progressivism, Anna also provided Jane with a negative model of what a daughter of John Addams should be, and one Jane utilized to criticize the upbringing of younger girls and to symbolize the immoralities of so much of modern life. As Marcet makes clear, Anna was, from a moral point of view, quite useless: ". . . I never saw her do anything more useful with her hands than adjust the objects in a room, care for her flowers and strum a guitar when she sang the ballads of Moore and Burns." To Jane, this sort of accomplished uselessness was an affront to her father's values. Other girls in comfortable circumstances might cooperate with such a woman, and prepare themselves for a life of social engagements and decorative achievements. To Jane, Anna's ideas of upbringing were the embodiment of Tolstoy's stern warning against the "snare of preparation," the conspiracy of society to entangle the young in curious inactivity "at the very period of life when they are longing to construct the world anew and to conform it to their own ideals." When Jane finally came to feel that such a life was profoundly "immoral," she had begun the process of becoming a progressive. She had used her upbringing in Christian ethics, reinforced by her devotion to her father, to develop a critical vantage point from which to criticize modern society, and ultimately to

attempt to reform it. The seeds of Hull-House were planted in one girl's moral revulsion against privileged uselessness.¹¹

In 1877, Jane left home for the Rockford Seminary, a school founded by the descendants of New England Puritans to help Christianize the West. The school and its faculty were still openly encouraging their students to experience evangelical conversions and to enter missionary service in some way after graduation. In this environment, Jane discovered that her father's values were in fact not really compatible with an old-fashioned theology and the solace of "doing good" in some distant land. On the surface, nothing seemed more plausible than that she should convert publicly at one of the annual January "harvests" of new Christian converts, given her background and the social pressure of her teachers and peers. Instead, she explored on her own the books and lives of a number of Victorians who like her had found their parents' rigid faith no longer relevant, and who needed some kind of everyday social involvement in their own time and country as a way of acting out the demands of their Protestant consciences.¹²

Having resisted the intense pressure at Rockford, and having received her father's approval for doing so, Jane apparently was no longer subject to the pressures of orthodoxy. In time, she decided to join the local Presbyterian church in Cedarville and was accepted and baptised on October 14, 1888. A year later the church certified her as a member in good standing when she contemplated moving to Hull-House. "At this time [1888] there was certainly no outside pressure pushing me toward such a decision." She had experienced no conversion experience but did take upon herself "the outward expressions of the religious life with all humility and sincerity." She received no particular pressure from the church to conform to any demanding or outdated theology and so could interpret her religious commitment in any way she chose. She felt, she wrote many years later, "an almost passionate devotion to the ideals of democracy, and when in all history had these ideals been so thrillingly expressed as when the faith of the fisherman and the slave had been boldly opposed to the accepted moral belief that the well-being of a privileged few might justly be built upon the ignorance and sacrifice of the many?" She could no longer see how she could avoid identifying herself "with the institutional statement of this belief, as it stood in the little village in which I was born."¹³

Shortly after Jane's graduation from Rockford in 1881, John Addams died from complications developing from an attack of appendicitis. Understandably, Jane was grief stricken. The chief letter that survives indicates by its imagery that she identified her wounded psychological state with her own imagined physical problems. About two weeks after the event, she wrote to perhaps her closest friend: "I will not write of myself or how purposeless and without ambition I am. . . . The greatest sorrow that can ever come to me has

past and I hope it is only a question of time until I get my moral purposes straightened."¹⁴ Her father's death left her insides resembling her outsides, as it were: both needed to be "straightened." John Addams' presence and approval had enabled his daughter to stand tall, and she felt deformed without him.

Throughout most of the rest of the 1880's, Jane searched rather blindly for a vocational solution to her problems. She briefly attended the Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia, but suffered severe pain and a physical collapse. Dr. S. Weir Mitchell and her step-brother Harry operated on her spine with some success in 1882, but whenever she tried to make plans for travel or further study, the problems returned, and she was almost literally paralyzed and incapable of finding any solutions to her problems. On the one hand, many of these symptoms appear to have psychosomatic origins, producing a physical parallel to her psychological loss. On the other hand, her letters for the next dozen years, extending well into the Hull-House years of the 1890's, are full of genuine medical problems, and she rarely possessed what could be called good health. Rheumatism, sciatica, and persistent bowel discomfort all seemed to have troubled her at frequent intervals. Characteristically, however, she triumphed enough over her own problems to act as nurse to various afflicted relatives. When her brother Weber went insane, in the spring of 1883, she helped care for his wife and baby. Her sister Mary suffered from "neuralgia," and so Jane often watched over her children. Even Anna, now newly widowed, became ill and hard to manage, and Jane bore most of the burden of travelling with and caring for a step-mother she did not like. She almost seemed to be seeking out others sicker than herself, as if not to allow her own body the opportunity of betraying her.¹⁵

With John Addams gone, and Anna ill in some fashion or another, Jane could hardly resist the "cultivated" life style that was so dear to her step-mother. She thus spent much of the 1880's "preparing" for some vague and socially acceptable adulthood. She went to museums, balls, and parties, and during 1883-1885 and 1887-1888 she toured Europe—a typical remedy for all ailments often prescribed for the idle rich of that period. Between European trips the family lived in Baltimore, and, in the worst sort of do-gooder style, they at times even visited the "less fortunate" in their "shelters." Very little seems to point in any way to the Jane Addams of Hull-House or the progressive thinker who loomed so suddenly large in the 1890's. Indeed, in the midst of it all, Anna made a sustained attempt to preempt any such career. Well-bred and thoroughly prepared young ladies were supposed to marry and settle down, and Anna decided that her son George would be the perfect mate for Jane, thus paralleling the earlier match between Jane's sister Alice and her step-brother Harry Haldeman. But Jane had already turned down Rollin Salisbury, a promising Beloit student, and she was not about to settle

for the somewhat neurasthenic George. It was just as well. George slowly sank into insanity, never really recovered, and could never have been an appropriate mate for Jane.¹⁶

Yet this external biography is deceptive. Out of her step-mother's sight, Jane was going through an internal maturation that helped her come to terms with her own psychological needs and develop a form of progressivism compatible with them. Beginning in the late 1870's and continuing throughout the 1880's, Jane's closest confidante was Ellen Gates Starr, and through their letters we can trace the slow metamorphosis of an essentially religious if skeptical outlook into the Hull-House conscience of the 1890's.¹⁷

The first surviving letter is from Ellen to Jane, and it sets the tone of religious uncertainty that will provoke unceasing speculation until it achieves some form of progressivism. Ellen has been reading Horace Bushnell's *Character of Jesus* and would like to discuss it with Jane. Ellen found it pleasing and sensible, but admitted to doubt and confusion about the divinity of Jesus and whether she believed in it: "There is something in myself incomprehensible to me, in my views & feelings concerning religious subjects & especially this subject of the divinity of Christ." She would be glad to believe it, and much about Jesus seemed divine, but "I know that I don't." She thought of him instead like a character out of Dickens, many of whose characters seemed quite real to her. God, she went on, "is more a reality to me every day of my life. I think more of a reality for my *thinking* about Christ as divine." She had come to the conclusion that "heaven and hell are in the condition of the soul and certainly the condition of a soul who has experienced a single good impulse, is better than that of one who has experienced none."¹⁸ Her words express a blurry theology and a generally questioning attitude toward religion, yet she still regards the subject as important. She also has a premonition of the Hull-House idea in the phrase, "a single good impulse."

Jane's reply was similarly uncertain and confused. She thought that "a people or a nation are *saved* just as soon as they comprehend their god," and "comprehending your deity & being in harmony with his plans is to be saved." It did not make any difference if you realized Christ or not, it only mattered that "you realize God through Christ." You are a Christian "if God has become nearer to you, more of a reality" through Christ. She suggested that Ellen read Tennyson's "In Memoriam," even though it was clear in her own letter that she had herself not really experienced peace from reading it or anything else. The historical Jesus did not help her at all; he seemed to have been a Jew who lived a long time ago, and about whom there was a mysterious and incomprehensible beauty. She could never get any closer to him than that, and so she would settle for the minimal theology: "My creed is now *be sincere* & don't fuss."¹⁹

The letters continued for years in this earnest, searching tone. Jane spent four years at Rockford and Ellen one, yet neither seemed to have retained anything resembling a lucid theology or a peaceful conscience. Literary figures like Carlyle, Ruskin, Browning and Dickens were far more important, and more meaningful, sources of ideas than more formal works. Ellen's side of the correspondence was clearly more aesthetic and emotional, and she eventually passed through the Church of England to sanctuary in Roman Catholicism. On Jane's side, the concerns were somewhat more practical and of this world. Her father, her religion, and her future career—whatever it would be—would have to complement each other, or she could have no peace. Early in the letters she told Ellen "I, for my part am convinced that the success of that work in a large degree depends upon our religion and that I can never go abroad and use my best powers until I do settle it." With the advantage of time, it seems evident that the key to her career choice lay in ethical and religious needs; in the frivolities of life under Anna she could find no outlet worthy of her beloved father.²⁰

During the next revival at Rockford, a few months later, she searched her soul again. The services impressed her, and she was not really rebellious, but she did not convert. God still did not seem particularly close to her. "I see more the need of knowing God but he seems further off than he did" two years earlier. "I have been trying an awful experiment. I didn't pray, at least formally, for about three months, and was shocked to find that I feel no worse for it, I can think about a great many other things that are noble & beautiful. I feel happy and unconcerned and not in the least morbid." Yet, as a later letter makes clear, she may have been talking to keep up her courage, and her beliefs were in fact in painful flux. "I believe, my friend, it would be better for us not to talk about religion any more," because "my ideas are changing."²¹

The letters continued, full of details concerning the death of John Adams, further revivals, Jane's medical treatments and the severe lassitude and melancholy that accompanied them, and Ellen's joining the Anglican Church in the summer of 1883. Jane expressed her own sense of yearning even while she congratulated Ellen by admitting, at the same time, a lack of success in settling her religious doubts. While Jane toured Europe the correspondence slackened, but even while outwardly enjoying herself with Anna (and eluding George), Jane retained the tone of seriousness that indicated she had not given in. "I quite feel as if I were not following the call of my genius when I propose to devote a year's time to travel in search of a good time and this general idea of culture which some way never comanded [sic] my full respect," she wrote in 1883. "People complain of losing spiritual life when abroad. I imagine it will be quite as hard to hold to full earnestness of purpose."²²

The bottom of her confusion and depression came late in 1885 and early

in 1886, but even then Jane never lost her acute ability to analyze and understand herself. She quite understood that her problems revolved around her religious confusions, the demands of her father's values, and her need to stop "preparing" and start doing something which would fill her days with socially valuable activities. "I am always *blundering*, when I deal with religious nomenclature or sensations simply because my religious life has been so small," she wrote Ellen in one letter. She continued: "for many years it was my ambition to reach my father's moral requirements, & now when I am needing something more, I find myself approaching a crisis, & look rather wistfully to my friends for help." Two months later, during the period when Anna was pressuring her into attending parties and thinking of George as a life's companion, she contrasted her own empty life with Ellen's more rewarding one of teaching schoolgirls in Chicago. "You do as much work as I do, and more, in addition to all the time and vitality you give to your girls. . . I am filled with shame that with all my apparent leisure I do nothing at all."²³ Doing nothing in a decorous fashion could never satisfy the daughter of John Addams.

Yet in less than four years, Jane and Ellen discovered in their plans for Hull-House the solution to their religious and psychological needs. During her last trip of preparation to Europe, Jane finally experienced enough of life as well as literature and religion to make a conscious choice for a career. In England, she discovered Canon Samuel A. Barnett and his institutionalization of the religious conscience, Toynbee Hall. Toynbee Hall turned out to be the ideal combination of religious impulse and social improvement; it enabled the men connected with it to salve their consciences while actually making a difference in the lives of real people in genuine need. "It is a community for University men who live there, have their recreation and clubs and society all among the poor people, yet in the same style they would like in their own circle," she wrote to Alice. "It is so free from 'professional doing good,' so unaffectedly sincere and so productive of good results in its classes and libraries so that it seems perfectly ideal." In addition, she examined the People's Palace, a settlement house on a rather different plan, with facilities for working men to meet and socialize. She supplemented these rather practical activities with appropriate reading matter. In addition to John Ruskin and Leo Tolstoy, socially conscious and religious writers who were affecting many American reformers already, she apparently also absorbed two novels by Walter Besant, *The Children of Gibeon* and *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, both of which dealt with wealthy girls who devoted their time and money to helping the poor. The cumulative effect of these visits, this reading, and the frustrations she experienced in finding a career that would satisfy her religious conscience, was the decision to open Hull-House. The decision was probably made sometime in June, 1888, in London.²⁴

Thus, Jane Addams' early biography offers an excellent insight into several

of the key issues of progressivism. The religious atmosphere of her father's house created ethical imperatives that could not be met by the normal roles available for women at that time. Her religious faith apparently waned and died out altogether during the years after 1889, yet the socially productive reform activity went on, both in Jane Addams' life and in the institution so clearly identified with her. The activities involved were in no way political; what little political activity Jane Addams actually indulged in came several years later, and rose directly out of the settlement experience. Social science methodologies of most varieties would be quite useless in measuring and quantifying her activities, and yet what she did was nevertheless real, and extraordinarily influential on later political thinkers and politicians. Jane Addams' life, and Hull-House, thus provide excellent illustrations of how progressivism was essentially religious.

III

The early life of John Dewey provides several remarkable parallels to that of Jane Addams. In addition to showing how a leading progressive grew up, Dewey's early biography also provides a case study for the development of several of the most important of the ideas conceived during the Progressive Era. Dewey's Instrumentalism, and the educational innovations that it helped produce, affected American life far more than most progressive political campaigns, and for better or worse the term "progressive education" lingered on in American discourse long after most progressive movements were dead. Institutionalized under Dewey's supervision in the famous Dewey School, attached to the University of Chicago, these ideas were tested directly during the period, and the institution subsequently provided a living model to educators in much the same way that Hull-House came to symbolize all progressive settlement work. Once again, the sentiments and problems that led Dewey to his ideas and his school were basically religious, largely unrelated to the politics of that time.

John Dewey grew up in a middle class family in Burlington, Vermont. John's father, Archibald Sprague Dewey, was a successful grocer who had fought in the Civil War and then returned to Burlington to run a tobacco shop. At the age of forty-four he married Lucina Rich Dewey, a woman about twenty years younger than he. She had come from a prosperous family and apparently was always eager for her sons to receive good educations and be successful in life. John was the third of four sons, the eldest of whom died in infancy.

Dewey had an uneventful childhood in this innocent and democratic environment. The local public schools were very poor when he began his education, although they improved slightly while he was still a student. As a rule,

the students were rebellious and the teachers poorly trained; learning was largely a matter of memorizing dull texts and being able to repeat them word for word. Much of Dewey's actual learning came not from the school, but from the trips he took during the summers to his uncle's farm, to the nearby mountains for camping expeditions, or simply to the rural areas around the town. He thus retained, for his future educational theories, both the painful memories of uninspired book learning, and the pleasant memories of life lived among people and situations of a kind not usually regarded as educational.

When he was fifteen years old, Dewey entered the University of Vermont, which was located in Burlington. The school was very small; Dewey's graduating class in 1879 had only 18 students, and the entire school never had more than 100 students while Dewey was enrolled. It was more of an academy than a university or college in the modern sense, with a prescribed curriculum which reflected a tired Congregationalism. After graduation, Dewey spent two years in South Oil City, Pennsylvania, teaching in a school where a cousin was principal. He then read philosophy in Burlington for a year, while teaching at the Lake View Seminary in nearby Charlotte, marking time while trying to decide on a permanent career. He made several persistent efforts to get a scholarship to do graduate work at the new Johns Hopkins University but was unsuccessful until an aunt loaned him \$500 to help during the first year.²⁵

The single most important fact about Dewey's childhood for the student of progressivism, however, was his mother's strenuous evangelicalism and John's unrebellious acceptance of her beliefs. Dewey's parents were both Congregationalists attending the First Church of Burlington, and their activities appeared on many pages in the church records. Archibald Dewey was too easygoing to bother his son much about theological matters, but Lucina believed flatly that not every soul could be saved and that her duty as a mother and a Christian was to encourage conversion experiences as soon as possible. She was humorless, devout, earnest and untiring with her family's religious upbringing, and she encouraged them as well to help her in her many attempts at social work. From her, John learned prayers, heard Bible stories, and received the impetus needed to force a conversion when he was eleven years old. Significantly enough, she even wrote out his confession of faith herself. Perhaps inevitably, she also disapproved of many normal adolescent diversions, and card playing, pool, drinking and gambling were all strictly forbidden. She never ceased to question her children about the state of their souls; even as an old man, Dewey remembered her inquisition: "Are you right with Jesus? Have you prayed to God for forgiveness?"²⁶

When he became famous, Dewey always publicly denied any important acceptance of this parental pressure, picturing himself usually as a rebel

against it. No contemporary evidence supports the idea of such a rebellion. Dewey was apparently a shy and docile child; he accepted the values of his home, school and teachers, and he used this foundation for his first uncertain attempts at writing philosophy. On July 2, 1871, he joined the Congregational Church; he was soon teaching Sunday School, and he eventually became the first president of the Young People's Society, at a time when he was out of college and past voting age. His favorite teachers and intellectual friends for years were largely Protestant clergymen. They introduced him to the study of philosophy in ways that did not conflict with his religious ideas, and they provided him with possible career models. The marriage of philosophy and Congregationalism was evident in Dewey's writings well into his mature career.

During his senior year, Dewey found the first of several important philosophical mentors in Professor Henry Augustus Pearson Torrey. Like many New England intellectuals during the middle nineteenth century, Torrey moved from Scottish Common Sense Realism to Kantianism and took Dewey with him. He too was extremely religious, a converted Congregationalist who found no conflict between his religion and advanced philosophical ideas. The technicalities of Dewey's intellectual activities are less important for the student of progressivism than their meaning for Dewey's development: his life work was to be in professional philosophy, and nothing in his career seemed at all in conflict with the Congregationalist religion.²⁷ When Dewey applied for a teaching job at Johns Hopkins in 1883, both Matthew H. Buckham, President of the University of Vermont, and Professor Torrey wrote letters in support of his candidacy. Neither man could possibly have been termed unsound or skeptical on matters of religion, and both recommended Dewey. Buckham informed President Daniel Coit Gilman that Dewey was "sound and sweet all through—is true and loyal in matters of religion, and without any crochets, or drawback of any kind, so far as I know." Torrey agreed: "Mr. Dewey has always sustained an irreproachable moral character. When quite young he joined the church of which I am a member. Sincerity and depth of conviction rather than emotion have characterized his religious life. He is thoroughly trustworthy in these respects."²⁸

Dewey found it hard to work with two of the more eminent men he tried to study under at Hopkins. Charles Peirce did not yet have his later eminence as a "pragmaticist," and his difficult personality and insistence on teaching mathematical logic and scientific methodology made it hard for Dewey to profit from contact with him. G. Stanley Hall at first was more significant for Dewey, and under his guidance Dewey studied physiology and experimental psychology, took a more speculative course in psychological and ethical theories, and also participated in an experimental seminar in Hall's new area of interest, pedagogy. Dewey even did work independently in Hall's

laboratory, thus encountering for probably the first time the scientific and empirical methodologies that later proved so important for his contributions to progressive thought. Hall was a much more skeptical and genuinely scientific man than Torrey, and Dewey's work with him was a definite step away from conventionally religious speculation. Unfortunately, Hall seemed to regard Dewey as something of a threat to his own position at Hopkins, and while he was capable of praising Dewey to his face, he was at the same time writing letters to President Gilman that helped force a number of men, including Dewey, to leave Hopkins.²⁹

The greatest influence on Dewey was neither Peirce nor Hall, but rather George Sylvester Morris, a man whose background and character bore a marked resemblance to Dewey's. He too had been born in Vermont, only about seventy miles from Burlington, and had grown up in an intensely religious home and school environment. He too was a converted Congregationalist, one, in fact, who had seriously considered the ministry for a career. Like Dewey as well, he was shy and reticent; he was also in poor health, and spiritually ill at ease, despite his public orthodoxy.

This biographical similarity produced a philosophical kinship. As a "Christian spiritualist" throughout his whole life, Morris, like Dewey, adopted philosophical positions that seemed to offer answers to his religious problems and uncertainties. Morris was often a very confused man, better at criticizing what he disapproved of than at enunciating his own position, but he found in the study of Hegel a philosophy that satisfied him more than any other contemporary system. About the time he began his brief period at Hopkins, he gave Hegel close study, and he and Dewey shared this interest as well as Morris' interest in the history of philosophy and in Kant. Both men apparently tied their speculations together by criticizing Kant for his dualistic split between phenomena and noumena, by stressing how Hegel had overcome this split with his all-encompassing synthesis, and then by teaching the history of philosophy in such a way as to criticize those schools that stressed incompatible approaches, especially those in the British empirical tradition. Morris' basic position was that a valid theory of knowledge of necessity led to a theistic conception of the universe, that no reality existed outside the spiritual, and thus that the more spiritual something was, the more real it was. His place in the history of American philosophy is thus that of a minor but significant American idealist, specifically a Neo-Hegelian.³⁰

Dewey discussed Morris in several letters, and in two longer pieces. In 1889, after Morris had just died from the ill effects of a damp vacation trip, Dewey stressed that Morris had been drawn to the study of Hegel because his own mind leaned that way already. Morris' chief desire was to put man in relation to the Absolute Mind and thus gain personal strength. He found a Unity which he craved in Hegel's synthesis of the spiritual and the natural.

Dewey later wrote that he had had similar yearnings himself and found the same solace in the ideas of both Hegel and Morris. His analyses of Morris and Morris' relationship to Hegel thus have strong autobiographical overtones.

Writing in 1915 at the request of R.M. Wenley, Morris' biographer, Dewey had himself developed far beyond Hegel and Morris, and distance seemed to lend detachment. He found Morris' teaching "all the way through, an objective and ethical idealism." Morris managed the extraordinary feat of synthesizing Hegel, Fichte and Aristotle. "The world, the world truly seen, was itself ideal," and Morris insisted on this ideal character of the world, "as supporting and realizing itself in the energy of intelligence as the dominant element in creation." "That the struggle of intelligence to realize in man the supreme position which it occupies ontologically in the structure of the universe was a moral struggle, went without saying." Dewey then went on to discuss his mentor in language that should make it quite clear that in both Morris and Hegelian idealism, Dewey found the seeds of instrumentalism, the core of his intellectual contribution to progressivism, as well as the religious and moral solace already noted. Secure in his new philosophy in 1915, he could still use the key terms, "intelligence and the world," and "organic relationship of subject and object," that could just as easily be used in any discussion of a mature instrumentalism. In fact, one editor of Dewey's works used the former phrase slightly modified as a title, so "typical" was it of Dewey's mature position. Dewey's words are crucial:

From Hegel Morris derived his method. Speaking from the standpoint of the intellectual impression made upon a former student, I should say that he was at once strangely indifferent to and strangely preoccupied with the dialectic of Hegel. Its purely technical aspects did not interest him. But he derived from it an abiding sense of what he was wont to term the organic relationship of subject and object, intelligence and the world. This was the supreme instance of the union of opposites in a superior synthesis, and, as it were, vouched for the reality of the dialectic principle all along the line. As I recall the current of his teachings both in the critical parts of his lectures on the history of philosophy and in his constructive courses—such as his *Real Logic*,—the contrast which most frequently recurred was between a unity which excluded differences, and a unity which existed in and through differences. When he talked, as he was wont to do, of the mechanical and the organic, it was this contrast which stood forth. It was a contrast between the dead and the living, and the contrast was more moral and spiritual than physiological, though biology might afford adumbrative illustrations. His adherence to Hegel (I feel quite sure), was because Hegel had demonstrated to him, in a great variety of fields of experience, the supreme reality of this principle of a living unity maintaining itself through the medium of differences and distinctions.³¹

Students of progressivism thus have reasonably conclusive contemporary evidence of the first key episode in Dewey's odyssey to instrumentalism. The evangelical Congregationalism that had such a strong impact on both men was not something they could forget while they pursued their professional ca-

reers. The impact of any number of events, from Darwinism to German biblical criticism, made it all but impossible for men of such intelligence to retain the old Congregationalism intact, but it did help define their psychological yearnings and thus their preferences in philosophical systems.

Only with these considerations in mind can students completely comprehend Dewey's remarkably emotional recollection of his intellectual life during this period. Using language which seems more religious and psychological than philosophical (in adjoining paragraphs he uses words like "at least a temporary conversion," and "a trying personal crisis"), he described how it had felt for him to adopt his philosophical system:

There were, however, also "subjective" reasons for the appeal that Hegel's thought made to me; it supplied a demand for unification that was doubtless an intense emotional craving, and yet was a hunger that only an intellectualized subject-matter could satisfy. It is more than difficult, it is impossible, to recover that early mood. But the sense of divisions and separations that were, I suppose, borne in upon me as a consequence of a heritage of New England culture, divisions by way of isolation of self from the world, of soul from body, of nature from God, brought a painful oppression,—or, rather, they were an inward laceration. My earlier philosophic study had been an intellectual gymnastic. Hegel's synthesis of subject and object, matter and spirit, the divine and the human, was, however, no mere intellectual formula; it operated as an immense release, a liberation. Hegel's treatment of human culture, of institutions and the arts, involved the same dissolution of hard-and-fast dividing walls, and had a special attraction for me.³²

This passage, so rare in Dewey's writings for its vividness and emotionality, marks a key turning point in the development of his progressivism, and points up the parallels in his development to that of Jane Addams. The New England moral environment, the sense of isolation of the self from the world, the feelings of oppression and inner laceration, all resemble Addams' feelings in struggling away from the "snare of preparation," when she felt so much shame at her privileged leisure and yearned for morally satisfying contact with the world. Any student of Erikson will recognize the signs of an identity crisis, and the time when the moratorium, the period of waiting and looking around for a suitable career, is about to end. Dewey's slow movement from mentor to mentor, from philosophical position to philosophical position, was taking him to a psychologically more satisfying position: that of a man of science and reason whose philosophical position demanded that he reform the world in which he lived and not always speculate about a world in someone's head.

Dewey's decade at Michigan, from 1884-1894, except for a year at Minnesota, was crucial to his intellectual as well as his psychological development. He was promoted rapidly, received gratifying salary increases, married a student, and began his large family. By the time he left, he had become Morris' successor as chairman of the Department of Philosophy and a full professor paid \$2200 a year. He was also able to recruit three talented younger men to

the faculty: James Haydon Tufts, later his collaborator on an important book; George Herbert Mead, soon to become his closest friend and a great personal as well as intellectual influence on Dewey; and Alfred Henry Lloyd, a student of William James and Josiah Royce at Harvard, who later became an idiosyncratic ally of the pragmatists.³³

Dewey's religious and idealistic predilections were clearly evident in his major work of this period, his *Psychology* (1887). The book is of interest to students of progressivism only as a tombstone for Dewey's idealistic beginnings, rather than as an opening of a new era in his thought. The book attempted bravely to be up to date in its science, but it failed badly, and at times seemed to be defending religion against the attacks of science. Its reception among the leading men in the field was deservedly unfriendly. William James was "sorely disappointed." He did not think it any use "trying to mediate between the bare miraculous self and the concrete particulars of individual mental lives; and all that Dewey effects by doing so is to take all the edge and definiteness away from the particulars when it falls to their turn to be treated." G. Stanley Hall was unhappy that the facts were not allowed to speak for themselves but instead had to be subordinated into Dewey's system. "That the absolute idealism of Hegel could be so cleverly adapted to be 'read into' such a range of facts, new and old," he wrote, "is indeed a surprise as great as when geology and zoology are ingeniously subjected to the rubrics of the six days of creation." Hall was quite correct, and Dewey took these criticisms and the others he received to heart; he also soon encountered William James' epochal *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) and thoroughly changed his psychological approach. By the time of his best work in the field, as in "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), Dewey had become a genuinely scientific Functionalist, the school which dominated at the University of Chicago while he was there. He then criticized strongly the reigning distinctions between stimulus and response, or between sensation and movement, and insisted that such distinctions did not correctly describe what actually happened; the process should be understood as an organic whole. Like others in the Chicago school, he analyzed what the subject under discussion did, or its function, and not what it was. These analyses soon led him directly into elementary school pedagogy, and his participation in advanced research in physiological psychology slowly ceased.³⁴

For the student of progressivism, Dewey's religious ideas and practices during this period are far more significant than his more professional philosophical and psychological studies. He continued, at least at first, the conventional habits of his Vermont years. He participated actively in the Student Christian Association, a group which sponsored regular meetings, encouraged Bible classes, and published its own monthly bulletin. Dewey gave several talks, and the newly rediscovered texts and reports of his addresses provide

the specific evidence needed to analyze the links between Dewey's overtly religious past and the covertly "religious" underpinnings of his mature, progressive work in education and philosophy. For skeptics who might find his words insufficient evidence of his Christian commitment, he also left evidence of active church attendance. He joined the First Congregational Church on November 2, 1884, faithfully attended the Sunday services, and even taught a Bible class on church history. The year in Minnesota, 1888-1889, seemed to mark a turning point for this conventional kind of activity. After his return to Michigan he was far less active. He was the only professor to participate in a three day Bible Institute in 1892, but this activity was exceptional for so late in his decade at Michigan. When he finally arrived in Chicago in 1894, he did not join the local church or continue his religious work with students. Thus, some time between 1890 and 1894 Dewey's conventional religiosity faded away, and his strong religious concerns became displaced onto political, social and educational problems.³⁵

Dewey's persisting religious commitment appears even in the titles of his talks, fusing as they do philosophy, social thought, and politics: "The Obligation to Knowledge of God" (Nov., 1884), "The Place of Religious Emotion" (Nov., 1886), "Christianity and Democracy" (March, 1892), and "The Relation of Philosophy to Theology" (Jan., 1893). When other works of this period are added, like "The Ethics of Democracy" (1888), Dewey's life at Michigan takes on a new light. No longer was he engaged solely in problems of psychology and philosophy; now he seems to have been working out many of his future stances on social and political issues and attempting to solve these public problems within a religious framework.³⁶

Read along with Dewey's more technical work in this period, these talks show conclusively that Dewey's early religious ideas developed into his concern for ethics in social and industrial life, ethics in political theory, ethics in personal growth, and ethics as an appropriate concern for all philosophers. As Dewey's overt participation in religious activities declined, his concern for a moral universe informed all his writings and became the center of his thought. A word like "dualism," for example, which might seem applicable only in a philosophical context, suddenly became political, applied to the class divisions between aristocracy and democracy, and fully as wicked as when it seemed to describe the separation of the "is" and the "ought" in the work of Kant. Properly understood, a word like "democracy" became far more than a form of government: it became a form of social interaction that evolved a political structure having divine sanction because it so well fitted the community for appropriate, healthy growth.

The most important of these little-known talks is "Christianity and Democracy," given at the Sunday morning services of the Students' Christian Association on March 27, 1892. Dewey's religion by this time had become a

liberal one, more in the tradition of Theodore Parker than of Lucina Dewey. "Every religion is an expression of the social relations of the community," Dewey said; "its rites, its cult, are a recognition of the sacred and divine significance of these relationships." Over time these relationships became condensed in symbols and dogma, and their origins forgotten, and they seemed to become ends in themselves. Society evolved while they decayed; in evolving, society developed new symbols and ideas. Religious feelings were thus always being renewed, and only those people who had lost contact with the most vital life around them should feel despair. He then summed up several problems associated with Christianity and concluded the first part of his discourse: "Christianity is revelation, and revelation means effective discovery, the actual ascertaining or guaranteeing to man of the truth of his life and the reality of the Universe."

At this point Dewey discovered the significance of democracy. He made the crucial links between the social matrix, man's intelligence or "reason," and Christianity that constituted the religious origins of his mature philosophy:

The kingdom of God, as Christ said, is within us, or among us. The revelation is, and can be, only in intelligence. It is strange to hear men call themselves Christian teachers, and at the same time condemn the use of reason and of thought in relation to Christian truth. Christianity as revelation is not only to, it is *in* man's thought and reason. Beyond all other means of appropriating truth, beyond all other organs of apprehension, is man's own action. Man interprets the Universe in which he lives in terms of his own action at the given time. Had Jesus Christ made an absolute, detailed and explicit statement upon all the facts of life, that statement would not have had meaning—it would not have been revelation—until men began to realize in their own action the truth he declared—until they themselves began to *live* it. In final analysis, man's own action, his own life movement, is the only organ he has for receiving and appropriating truth. Man's action is found in his social relationships—the way in which he connects with his fellows. It is man's social organization, the state in which he is expressing himself, which always has and always must set the form and sound the key-note to the understanding of Christianity.

Thus, "the significance of democracy as revelation" was that democracy "enables us to get truths in a natural everyday and practical sense." Democracy for Dewey was not mere governmental machinery but "a spiritual fact," the "means by which the revelation of truth is carried on." It was only in democracy that "the community of ideas and interest through community of action, that the incarnation of God in man (man, that is to say, as organ of universal truth) becomes a living, present thing, having its ordinary and natural sense." Now that Dewey was moving from the abstractions of Hegel to the concreteness of poverty, the obvious conclusion was a demand for social action, and he closed with this exhortation:

Can anyone ask for better or more inspiring work? Surely to fuse into one the social and religious motive, to break down the barriers of Pharisaism and self-assertion which isolate religious thought and conduct from the common life of man, to realize the state as one Commonwealth of truth—surely this is a cause worth battling for.³⁷

For students who know Dewey only from his days at Columbia, when he seemed to deny any interest in religious or supernatural concerns, such a "homily" may seem out of place, but within the context of his decade at Michigan it clearly was not. It was a logical position for an intelligent mind with Dewey's evangelical background, when confronted with the realities of the depression of the early 1890's and the genuine human agonies that so many people were suffering. Within this frame of reference, Dewey's future career becomes that of a religious prophet. As he told the students in January, 1893:

The next religious prophet who will have a permanent and real influence on men's lives will be the man who succeeds in pointing out the religious meaning of democracy, the ultimate religious value to be found in the normal flow of life itself. It is the question of doing what Jesus did for his time.³⁸

Dewey received his call from the University of Chicago in part because of the strong recommendation of James H. Tufts. In his letter to President William Rainey Harper, Tufts went over Dewey's extensive publications and impressive record as teacher and administrator and stressed that Dewey was a simple, modest man who made friends easily. He was also "a man of a religious nature, is a church member, and believes in working with the church. He is, moreover, actively interested in practical ethical activity, and is a valued friend at the Hull-House of this city."³⁹ Tufts thus included in his comments both the religious origins and the political and ethical results of Dewey's mature views. Yet after his arrival, Dewey showed little interest in orthodox religious activity. His mother, who had moved in with the family, made strong objections; Dewey ignored her and even refused to send his own children to Sunday school. He told Lucina that he had attended so often as a boy that his own children did not need to go at all. Instead, Dewey's strong ethical drive was displaced onto the "real" world: in efforts to reform the Chicago public schools, to bring the University into closer contact with Chicago institutions, and in work with Jane Addams. Dewey was a member of the first Board of Trustees of Hull-House, and he worked hard at the job. In pursuing these activities, he came into contact with radical workers and social thinkers, and he found a special attraction in the ideas of Henry George. He admired Jane Addams so much that he named his youngest child Jane after her.⁴⁰

Dewey's official position was that of head professor in the departments of philosophy and pedagogy. His philosophical work was within the framework of "experimental idealism," to use the term he sometimes used to describe this transitional phase between his Hegelianism and the Instrumentalism of his maturity. Most of his ethical fervor, at least for awhile, however, seemed to be concentrated on pedagogy. He wanted very much to have a school to use as an educational laboratory, and he thought he had found the ideal environment for it in a new research university and a president who seemed expansive and open to such innovations. Unfortunately, as Dewey later learned to his distress, Harper's support would be more moral than financial. Other university departments had come to the bank first, and Dewey found only minimal funding support when he most needed it. Except for a few institutional facilities and token seed money, Dewey's school had to rely largely on gifts and tuition for current expenses, and Dewey frequently found himself pleading for funds from a President who was already running deficits. Dewey also did not have the temperament of an administrator; while he could be a creditable enough chairman of a small university department of philosophy, he was plainly out of his depth running what soon became a large establishment devoted to young students, independent and occasionally uncooperative teachers, critical parents, and a sometimes uncomprehending university bureaucracy.⁴¹

In one of his articles in the 1880's, Dewey had argued that psychology really was the philosophic method, because consciousness was the whole of reality and psychology was the science of consciousness. As chairman of the philosophy department, Dewey recruited one of the most remarkable groups of men ever to serve together as an American philosophy department. It was also quite possibly the only real philosophical school ever to exist in America, and one that showed Dewey's influence long after he went to Columbia. The department developed directly out of Dewey's preoccupation with psychology as philosophic method, catalyzed into Instrumentalism by William James' *Principles of Psychology* (1890). Dewey's personal concern with his own growing family and their education, with the Laboratory School, and with Hull-House also were influential. James Tufts, already on the faculty, helped bring in Dewey. George Herbert Mead and James Rowland Angell soon accepted positions in philosophy and psychology. Edward Scribner Ames and Addison Moore arrived shortly thereafter, and other figures were involved through other departments or through brief visits. Central to the thought of this school was the concept of activity, which they regarded as being ethical and psychological as well as biological. Activity implied an organism, this organism implied growth, and the growing organism implied a social milieu in which to grow. Thus ideas from the New England past, like Emersonian "organicism," combined with European ideas like the Darwinian

"evolution" and the Hegelian "process" into a new intellectual stance, without absolutes and with values generated by the growing organism. The best men in the field soon recognized the contributions of the new school. As William James wrote, shortly before Dewey left Chicago: "Chicago University has during the past six months given birth to the fruit of its ten years of gestation under John Dewey. The result is wonderful—a *real school*, and *real Thought*. Important thought, too! Did you ever hear of such a city or such a University?" At Harvard, "we have thought, but no school. At Yale a school but no thought. Chicago has both."⁴²

Yet both the fame of the school and of Dewey's major philosophical publications still lay in the future. At the time, he was much more concerned with education and his new laboratory school. Chicago was already the scene of considerable educational activity when Dewey arrived. Francis W. Parker was the focal point for a concerted attempt to reform the education of primary school age children, and the training of their teachers. At the Chicago Normal School and its successor, the Chicago Institute: Academic and Pedagogic, Parker developed theories of organic growth and the returning of children to Nature that often seemed to have a close resemblance to the ideas which Dewey was developing. In addition, Parker had interested Anita McCormick (Mrs. Emmons) Blaine, the McCormick reaper heiress and the daughter-in-law of James G. Blaine, in his theories, and she supplied the funds for Parker's newest school. Dewey supported Parker, and Dewey's own school, known variously as the "University Elementary School," the "Dewey School," or the "Laboratory School," inevitably became connected with Parker's earlier efforts in the minds of many people. Dewey usually emphasized society in preference to Parker's Nature, and the Dewey School was to be a laboratory for the testing of psychological hypotheses rather than a normal school for the training of future school teachers, but the efforts of the two men did run parallel, and each man respected the other. Parker also shared many elements of Dewey's religious and Hegelian background, although at a noticeably lower intellectual level.⁴³

Dewey began his new school enthusiastically, quickly building up the student body and a small but loyal group of parents and friends who were willing to donate funds to the school. The old dualism that separated everyday life from learning, and that led teachers to insist that children should adjust to a preconceived curriculum, immediately disappeared. Instead, Dewey made the solving of problems the key to the educational growth of the children, and he insisted that educational and moral values could only be generated in the process of solving the problems posed by modern society as the child actually encountered them. Just as the old conception of a reflex arc separated the parts of a response to a stimulus artificially, so the old school had separated learning from experience. Dewey thought learning was inseparable from

experience and arranged the curriculum accordingly. Children approached history through primitive social and economic tasks, obtaining through knowledge of weaving and carpentry, for example, a knowledge of how societies evolved. They tried to cook properly, and by analyzing food came to understand the role of protein, fat and carbohydrates. The teachers were prepared subtly to organize possible choices for the students, but the burden of their growth was suddenly on their own shoulders, and the rigid structure of the past became far more fluid, flexible, and relative to each individual child, and his rate of growth and interests.⁴⁴

The Dewey School had importance for progressivism far beyond its decade under Dewey's direct guidance. While at the time it did not achieve national influence, it did help generate Dewey's ideas on progressive education and philosophy and gave him a forum for publicizing his new insights.⁴⁵ For the student of progressivism in the whole country, the great significance of both the school and the ideas may well lie in the way education in Dewey's mind seemed to absorb all of the energy which he once devoted to the church. The school became the key institution in the saving of souls for democracy. Democracy itself became a kind of heaven on earth, where salvation would come for all those who were brought up organically, according to their true natures, so that growth could always continue and always reinvigorate society. Where once the Congregational Church had been the agent of God in separating the sheep from the goats, so the school became the agent of Nature as it benevolently shaped souls in a kind of democratic Universalism, assuming that now all souls could be saved.

Dewey's writings during this period developed directly out of his school experience, and, in the morality of their rhetoric, show the religious framework of his educational progressivism. This is not yet the secular skeptic of the Columbia years after 1904, doing his work in the spirit of science regardless of consequences. This is a man of deep faith finding in the school a congregation of future democratic citizens to preach to. The key essay during this period is "Ethical Principles Underlying Education," printed in 1897. In it, citizens could discover that "the moral responsibility of the school, and of those who conduct it, is to society," and thus it is necessary to discuss "the entire structure and the specific working of the school system from the standpoint of its moral position and moral function to society." The child who attends such a school "is an organic whole, intellectually, socially, and morally, as well as physically. The ethical aim which determines the work of the school must accordingly be interpreted in the most comprehensive and organic spirit." One must always remember that the child will grow up to live "in the United States, a democratic and progressive society."

Thus Dewey could shift easily from the ethical to the pedagogical to the social reform level of discourse. "Apart from the thought of participation in

social life the school has no end or aim," he argues. "We get no moral ideals, no moral standards for school life excepting as we so interpret in social terms." These terms were of course Dewey's liberal democratic ones, and at times he seemed to conceive of the school as a universal Hull-House for the young, training them to be the saints of modern democracy. "Interest in the community welfare, an interest which is intellectual and practical, as well as emotional—an interest, that is to say, in perceiving whatever makes for social order and progress, and for carrying these principles into execution—is the ultimate ethical habit to which all the special school habits must be related if they are to be animated by the breath of moral life."

Dewey's closing paragraphs have a peculiarly religious ring to them. Religiosity has become an emphasis on "moral principles" for Dewey, just as it did for many other British Victorians and American progressives who were losing their conventional faith. "What we need in education more than anything else is genuine, not merely nominal faith in the existence of moral principles which are capable of effective application." These moral principles need to be "brought down to the ground through their statement in social and in psychological terms." What everyone has to recognize is "that moral principles are real in the same sense in which other forces are real: that they are inherent in community life, and in the running machinery of the individual." If educators "can secure a genuine faith in this fact, we shall have secured the only condition which is finally necessary in order to get from our educational system all the effectiveness there is in it." Any teacher operating "in this faith will find every subject, every method of instruction, every incident of school life pregnant with ethical life."⁴⁶

Or, as he said even more graphically in "My Pedagogic Creed" (1897): "in this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God."⁴⁷

IV

Jane Addams and John Dewey provide psychological paradigms of the progressive experience, and of how this experience came to produce the "progressive frame of mind." With Jane Addams, the progressive movement was the movement for social settlements. It grew out of her staunch Protestant home and the moral values of that home and Rockford College. She found herself unable to believe the theology, but she could never rid herself of the ethical residue of so much Christian teaching. The social milieu so attractive to her step-mother seemed to offend this conscience, or superego, to the point first of depression and psychological misery, and then to the point of seeking beneficial alternatives. Jane Addams' identity, or ego integrity, in the Eriksonian scheme, demanded an institution for the doing of good in a

Christian way, and Hull-House was the solution. Jane Addams thus in effect "invented" one career within progressivism, and her subsequent ideas for the progressive frame of mind developed accordingly.

Dewey's problems were remarkably similar, allowing for the differences of sex and biography. Shy and intellectual, he was at least a male in a society that tolerated moralistic school and college teachers. But his mind demanded more advanced work, and his conscience required him to apply his teachings in much the same way that his own mother had. Where Jane Addams modelled herself on her father, on literary heroes like Tolstoy and Ruskin, and on settlement pioneers at Toynbee Hall, Dewey modelled himself on his mother, and on a series of male mentors like Torrey and Morris, who were both Protestant in background and proficient in technical philosophy. He too felt the pain of life lived apart from the world and of ideas that did not seem to apply to the world. He found solace first in philosophical ideas, then in a professional career and a family. Only in middle age did these interests come together successfully in the progressive institution of the Dewey School and in the progressive frame of mind that work in that school helped to develop. Dewey, too, came close to inventing a career for himself that did not really exist when he was growing up. The movement for progressive education, like that for social settlement, was a progressive movement; both helped to shape the progressive frame of mind, and both contributed to the essentially religious nature of that frame of mind.

Once these aspects of progressivism have been identified, many of the events and ideas of the period take on new resonance. The populism of a William Jennings Bryan, the muckraking Christianity of a Lincoln Steffens, and the Protestant chemistry of a Harvey Wiley seem all of a piece. Most progressive movements add up to a progressivism that was essentially religious, a public enactment of the Protestant morals that dominated in so many households of the later nineteenth century. The climax came when Theodore Roosevelt so emotionally addressed the delegates of the 1912 convention of the Progressive Party, and exhorted them to stand at Armageddon and battle for the Lord. He was quite serious.

As Frederic C. Howe, in one of the best memoirs of the period, summed up the feeling of progressivism:

Physical escape from the embraces of evangelical religion did not mean moral escape. From that religion my reason was never emancipated. By it I was conformed to my generation and made to share its moral standards and ideals. It was with difficulty that realism got lodgment in my mind; early assumptions as to virtue and vice, goodness and evil remained in my mind long after I had tried to discard them. This is, I think, the most characteristic influence of my generation. It explains the nature of our reforms, the regulatory legislation in morals and economics, our belief in men rather than in institutions and our messages to other peoples. Missionaries and battle-

ships, anti-saloon leagues and Ku Klux Klans, Wilson and Santo Domingo are all a part of that evangelistic psychology that makes America what she is.⁴⁸

One is tempted to conclude, "Amen."

NOTES

1. Peter Filene, "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" *American Quarterly* 22 (1970): 20-34.
 2. Walter Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870* (New Haven, 1957).
 3. Erik Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York, 1950, 1963); *Young Man Luther* (New York, 1958); *Gandhi's Truth* (New York, 1969). I have explored the relevant literature, and explained some of my own biases and reactions to it, in Robert M. Crunden, "Freud, Erikson and the Historian: A Bibliographical Survey," *Canadian Review of American Studies* vol. 4, no. 1 (Spring, 1973): 48-64.
 4. Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York, 1955) and George Mowry, *The California Progressives* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1951). Among the more important of the controversial works related to these themes are: E. Daniel Potts, "The Progressive Profile in Iowa," *Mid-America* 47 (October, 1965); Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., "The Origins of Progressive Leadership," in Elting Morison, ed., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), 8 Appendix 3, 1462-5; Richard B. Sherman, "The Status Revolution and Massachusetts Progressive Leadership," *Political Science Quarterly* 78 (March, 1965); William T. Kerr, Jr., "The Progressives of Washington, 1910-1912," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 55 (January, 1964); Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Party Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 55 (October, 1964); J.J. Huthmacher, "Urban Liberalism and the Age of Reform," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 44 (September, 1962); David P. Thelen, "Social Tensions and the Origins of Progressivism," *Journal of American History* 56 (September, 1969); Jack Tager, "Progressives, Conservatives, and the Theory of the Status Revolution," *Mid-America* 48 (July, 1966).
 5. Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism* (New York, 1963); James Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State: 1900-1918* (Boston, 1968).
 6. For other examples, in addition to the studies of Jane Addams and John Dewey that follow, see Robert M. Crunden, *The Mind and Art of Albert Jay Nock* (Chicago, 1964); *A Hero In Spite of Himself: Brand Whitlock in Art, Politics and War* (New York, 1969); and "George D. Herron in the 1890s: A New Frame of Reference for the Study of the Progressive Era," *Annals of Iowa* 42 no. 2 (Fall, 1973).
 7. Studies of Jane Addams effectively begin with James Weber Linn, *Jane Addams* (New York, 1935). Linn was Miss Addams' nephew, and he left a devoted portrait based both on material supplied by his aunt and his own experiences in the family. She checked the early portions of his work before she died. Anne Firor Scott's introduction to *Democracy and Social Ethics* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), vii-xxv, effectively begins modern scholarship. Christopher Lasch offered an enlightening interpretation in *The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963* (New York, 1965), and supplemented his insights with primary sources in *The Social Thought of Jane Addams* (Indianapolis, 1965). The best bibliographical guide can be found in John C. Farrell's thoroughly documented study, *Beloved Lady: A History of Jane Addams' Ideas on Reform and Peace* (Baltimore, 1967). Daniel Levine emphasized political and radical elements in her thought in *Jane Addams and the Liberal Tradition* (Madison, Wis., 1971). The best overall study, and also the most recent, is Allen F. Davis, *American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams* (New York, 1973).
- Of these sources, the books by Linn, Levine and Davis are the most helpful for early life. They should be supplemented by the famous autobiography, *Twenty Years At Hull-*

House (New York, 1961, c. 1910); the quotation here is from p. 19. Also of value were two articles by Marcet Haldeman-Julius, who was the daughter of Jane's sister Alice and her step-brother Harry Haldeman: "The Two Mothers of Jane Addams," an unpublished sketch in folder no. 127, Haldeman-Julius Family Papers, at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle; and "Jane Addams As I Knew Her," *The Reviewer's Library* no. 7, also at Chicago, but emphasizing more the period after 1890. See also Ronald H. Beam, "Cedarville's Jane Addams" (Cedarville, Ill., 1966), which contains some valuable pictures, and details about architecture and geography not available elsewhere (available from the author, Cedarville, Ill., 61013).

8. Addams, *Twenty Years*, ch. 1; Levine, *Jane Addams*, ch. 1.

9. Addams, *Twenty Years*, ch. 1.

10. Marcet Haldeman-Julius, "Jane Addams As I Knew Her," 4-6; "The Two Mothers of Jane Addams," 9, 12; Linn, *Jane Addams*, 29-30.

11. The chief biographical details are from Marcet Haldeman-Julius, "The Two Mothers of Jane Addams," 13-17, supplemented by *Twenty Years*, chap. 4, the reference to Tolstoy from the last page of that chapter. I cannot agree with Davis, *American Heroine*, 7, that a real bond of affection existed between Jane and her step-mother.

12. Levine, *Jane Addams*, ch. 2; Linn, *Jane Addams*, ch. 3; Addams, *Twenty Years*, ch. 3; see especially, Jane Addams to Ellen Gates Starr, (hereafter cited as JA to EGS), August 11, 1879, January 29, 1880, and February 13, 1881, all from the Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College (hereafter cited as Smith).

13. The baptismal certificate, dated October 14, 1888, and the transfer statement, dated September 1, 1889, are both in the Jane Addams Memorial Collection, University of Illinois, Chicago Circle (hereafter cited as Chicago). Jane herself misdates the event by several years in *Twenty Years*, 68-9, as does Linn, *Jane Addams*, 80-1.

14. JA to EGS, September 3, 1881, Smith.

15. JA to Alice [Addams Haldeman], July 18, 1883, Addams Papers, Chicago; Levine, *Jane Addams*, 25-6. These remarks are developed from a large number of letters, most too trivial to cite in detail, but see reel 1.24 of the microfilm edition of the Jane Addams Papers, Swarthmore College Peace Collection (hereafter cited as SCPC) for the dates indicated, and JA to Alice [Addams Haldeman], March 3, 1888, Addams Papers, Chicago. On Jane's role as nurse, see especially JA to EGS, April 24, 1883, Smith; JA to Alice, January, 1886(?) and January 10, 1886; JA to Harry [brother Dr. Harry Haldeman], September 12, 1883; JA to Alice, October 8, 1883, all in Addams Papers, Chicago.

16. There are many atmospheric letters describing the European travels, SCPC, reel 1.24, as for example, JA to Alice, May 7, 1885. There is also a travel diary beginning August 29, 1883, in the Addams Papers, Chicago, full of geographical and literary trivia, and all but devoid of introspection and ideas—appropriately enough. For Baltimore, see JA to Alice, February 10, 1886, October 23, 1886, November 24, 1886, January 22, 1887, and November 11, 1887, all Addams Papers, Chicago. For Rollin Salisbury, see Linn, *Jane Addams*, 49-50.

17. For background on Ellen Gates Starr, see Linn, *Jane Addams*, 45; Marcet Haldeman-Julius, "Jane Addams As I Knew Her," 3; Eleanor Grace Clark, "Ellen Gates Starr, O.S.B. (1859-1940)," *Commonweal* 31 (March 15, 1940): 444-7.

18. EGS to JA, July 27, 1879, SCPC, reel 1.1.

19. JA to EGS, August 11, 1879, Smith.

20. JA to EGS, November 22, 1879, Smith.

21. JA to EGS, January 29 and May 15, 1880, Smith.

22. JA to EGS, May 15, 1880, January 7, 1883, July 11, 1883, and for the quotation JA to EGS, August 12, 1883, all Smith.

23. JA to EGS, December 6, 1885 and February 7, 1886, Smith.

24. *Twenty Years*, 72-3, 61-2; Davis, *American Heroine*, 40-52; JA to Alice, June 14, 1888, Addams Papers, Chicago. These should be supplemented by the following: Jane's passing reference to a trip of Ellen's to the Barnetts and Toynbee Hall, March,

1892, reel 1.24, SCPC; JA to Alice, March, 1892(?), Addams Papers, Chicago; and several letters from Barnett to Jane Addams on reel 1.17, SCPC, e.g., Samuel A. Barnett to JA, May 7, 1893, and June 9, 1893. On Ruskin and Tolstoy the best source is Peter J. Frederick, "European Influences on the Awakening of the American Social Conscience, 1886-1904," (Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of California, Berkeley, 1966).

25. The key sources for Dewey's early biography are Paul Arthur Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of John Dewey* (Evanston, Ill., 1939), 3-45, a biographical sketch written by Dewey's daughters with his cooperation; and the following work of George Dykhuizen, some of which is overlapping: "John Dewey: The Vermont Years," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 20 (Oct.-Dec., 1959), 515-44; "An Early Chapter in the Life of John Dewey," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13 (Oct., 1952), 563-72; and *The Life and Mind of John Dewey* (Carbondale & Edwardsville, Ill., 1973).

26. Dykhuizen, "John Dewey: The Vermont Years," esp. 521-2, and Sidney Hook, "Some Memories of John Dewey," *Commentary* 14 (Sept., 1952), 246.

27. There is a large and sometimes technical literature on Dewey's early years. In addition to the works already cited, see Dewey's own essay, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," in George P. Adams and William Pepperell Montague, eds., *Contemporary American Philosophy* (New York, 1962, c. 1930), II, 13-27, and Lewis S. Feuer, "H.A.P. Torrey and John Dewey: Teacher and Pupil," *American Quarterly* 10 (Spring, 1958), 34-54.

28. Dykhuizen, "John Dewey: The Vermont Years," prints most of the surviving primary source material from these years. See esp. M.H. Buckham to President Gilman, April 3, 1883, and H.A.P. Torrey to President Gilman, April 5, 1883, quoted 542-3 from the Johns Hopkins University Library Archives. Feuer, "H.A.P. Torrey and John Dewey," also quotes the April 5, 1883 letter in full.

29. George Dykhuizen, "John Dewey at Johns Hopkins," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 22 (Jan.-March, 1961), 103-16, prints the relevant Dewey letters, especially Dewey to H.A.P. Torrey, Oct. 5, 1882, and Dewey to W. T. Harris, Jan. 17, 1884; see, in addition, Hugh Hawkins, *Pioneer: A History of the Johns Hopkins University, 1874-1889* (Ithaca, 1960), and Dorothy Ross, *G. Stanley Hall: The Psychologist as Prophet* (Chicago, 1972), both of which contain material that Dykhuizen does not exploit. They should be supplemented by two studies of Peirce: Max H. Fisch and Jackson I. Cope, eds., *Studies in the Philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), 277-311, 355-60, which is rather too defensive of Peirce and not always aware of Gilman's motives and problems; and Joseph L. Brent III, "The Life of Charles Sanders Peirce," (Ph.D. thesis, UCLA, 1960), which is not as helpful as it should be.

30. R.M. Wenley, *The Life and Work of George Sylvester Morris* (New York, 1917), is the pioneer study by a friend and colleague at Michigan. It has a great many flaws as a memoir, but it does print long excerpts from private letters and similar valuable contemporary sources, and the philosophical comments are often useful. See especially 187, 239, 270. Marc Edmund Jones, *George Sylvester Morris: His Philosophical Career and Theistic Idealism* (New York, 1968), is the academic work of a former clergyman. It is highly personal, badly written, and adds very little to Wenley except an emphasis on Morris' evangelical theism. For useful texts and introductory comments on American Hegelianism, see William H. Goetzmann, ed., *The American Hegelians* (New York, 1973).

31. The early letters are Dewey to Torrey, October 5, 1882, Dewey to W.T. Harris, January 17, 1884, and Dewey to Torrey, October 5, 1883, printed in Dykhuizen, "Dewey at Hopkins," 107-8. For a printed tribute, see "The Late Professor Morris," in Fredson Bowers et al., eds., *The Early Works of John Dewey, (1882-1898)* (Carbondale, Ill., 1967-72), III, 3-13. For my chief quotations, see Wenley, *Morris*, 308 ff., and 313 ff.

32. Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," in Adams and Montague, eds., *Contemporary American Philosophy*, II, 19.

33. In addition to Dewey's two autobiographical sketches, the chief sources for the

Michigan years are Willinda Savage, "The Evolution of John Dewey's Philosophy of Experimentalism As Developed at the University of Michigan," (Ed.D. thesis, University of Michigan, 1960); Lewis Feuer, "John Dewey and the Back to the People Movement in American Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 20 (Oct.-Dec., 1959), 545-68; and George Dykhuizen, "John Dewey and the University of Michigan," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 23 (Oct.-Dec., 1962), 513-44. There is also a useful account in Earl Weaver, "John Dewey: A Spokesman for Progressive Liberalism," (Ph.D. thesis, Brown, 1963), 33 ff. In view of the emphasis of this article, I think it worth pointing out that both Tufts and Mead were Massachusetts sons of Congregationalist ministers, while Lloyd at one time planned to enter that ministry.

34. See Fredson Bowers, et al., eds., *The Early Works of John Dewey, (1882-1898)*, II, *Psychology* (Carbondale, Ill., 1967). Dykhuizen, "Dewey at Michigan," surveys reviewer opinion, 526-7; the William James quote is from a letter to Croom Robertson, which Ralph Barton Perry apparently mis-dates as 1886 (i.e., he has James discussing in 1886 a book published in 1887), *The Thought and Character of William James* (2 vols., Boston, 1936), II, 516; the Hall quote is from his review in *The American Journal of Psychology* 1 (Nov., 1887), 156. On Dewey's place in the history of psychology, see in order of importance, Edna Heidbreder, *Seven Psychologies* (New York, 1933), ch. 6, 201-33, esp. 209; and Edwin G. Boring, *A History of Experimental Psychology* (New York, 1950, c. 1929), ch. 21-2, esp. 550-554.

35. Savage, "Dewey," ch. 3, esp. 132-8; Dykhuizen, "Dewey at Michigan," esp. 520-1. The "newly rediscovered" works were ignored by most students of Dewey who did not work in the Michigan library. They have all appeared in *The Early Works of John Dewey*, although reviewers have not, so far as I know, mentioned their presence.

36. *The Early Works of John Dewey*, I, 61-3, 90-92; IV (Carbondale, Ill., 1972), 3-10, 365-8; I, 227-49 (for "Ethics of Democracy").

37. Dewey, *Early Works*, IV, 3-10, the chief quotations condensing 7-10.

38. *Ibid.*, 367, from the question-and-answer period following the delivery of "The Relation of Philosophy to Theology."

39. James H. Tufts to President Harper, late 1893 or early 1894, University of Chicago Archives. References to subsequent correspondence relevant to the Chicago years are made from originals or copies presently in these archives.

40. The best secondary sources for personal affairs during these years are George Dykhuizen, "John Dewey: The Chicago Years," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 2 (Oct., 1964), 227-53, and "John Dewey in Chicago: Some Biographical Notes," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3 (Oct., 1965), 217-33. For an excellent exploration of Dewey within the context of American social thought during this period, see Lewis Feuer, "John Dewey and the Back to the People Movement in American Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 20 (Oct.-Dec., 1959), 545-68.

41. See especially Richard J. Storr, *Harper's University: The Beginnings* (Chicago, 1966), 296-302, and the following: John Dewey to Harper, February 15, March 5, April 10, 1894, and "Pedagogy: Memorandum," (Dec., 1894?), for early dealings; for subsequent budget requests, Dewey to Harper, Oct. 19, 1895, June 23, 1898, March 6 and March 8, 1899, August 12, 1902, Oct. 5 and Nov. 18, 1903, and February 12, 1904.

42. Dewey, "Psychology As Philosophic Method," *Early Works* I, 144-67; Dewey himself stressed the influence of James' *Principles* on his thought, as in Schilpp, ed., "Biography of John Dewey," 23. A pioneering essay on Dewey's place as a descendent of Hegel and Darwin is David F. Bowers, "Hegel, Darwin, and the American Tradition," in David F. Bowers, ed., *Foreign Influences in American Life* (Princeton, 1944), 146-71. The standard treatment of the Chicago School is Darnell Rucker, *The Chicago Pragmatists* (Minneapolis, 1969), esp. chap. 1 for this paragraph. Rucker, like a number of other Dewey scholars, has an unfortunate lack of historical sense relevant to the theme of this paper. Thus he feels free to cite Dewey's *A Common Faith* (New Haven, 1934), as if it indicated Dewey's position about 35 years earlier and simply dismisses evidence that

seems contrary to it; see pp. 10-11 and chap. 5. Rucker's book was well reviewed, with additional data, by Van Meter Ames, in the *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (Oct., 1970), 496-501. For James' comment, see *Letters of William James* (Boston, 1920) II, 201-2, quoting a letter of Oct. 29, 1903, to Mrs. Henry Whitman.

43. In addition to Dykhuizen's two articles on Chicago, the following were especially useful on Dewey in Chicago: Robert E. Tostberg, "Educational Ferment in Chicago," (Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1960); Robert McCaul, "Dewey and the University of Chicago," in 3 parts, *School and Society* 89 (March 25, April 8, and April 22, 1961), reprinted in William W. Brickman and Stanley Lehrer, eds., *John Dewey: Master Educator*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1961). For Dewey's public support of Parker, see his public letter to the editor, *Chicago Evening Post*, Dec. 19, 1895, copy in University of Chicago Archives. On Parker, see Jack K. Campbell, *Colonel Francis W. Parker: The Children's Crusader* (New York, 1967), and Merle Curti, *The Social Ideas of American Educators* (Paterson, N.J., 1959, c. 1935).

44. See especially Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, *The Dewey School* (New York, 1966, c. 1936), for the house version of the history of the school. It is full of problems as a source, since material from thirty years later is often mixed with contemporary data, and the Dewey version of events does not always correspond to contemporary documents, especially those about his resignation. Robert McCaul, "Dewey's Chicago," *School Review* 67 (Summer, 1959), 258-80, and Ida B. De Pencier, *The History of the Laboratory Schools: The University of Chicago, 1896-1965* (Chicago, 1967), are marginally useful. George H. Eastman, "John Dewey on Education: The Formative Years," 2 vols. (Ed.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1963), prints a number of useful documents relevant to the school, as well as Dewey's courses at Michigan and Chicago, in his appendices, 624 ff.

45. They are collected in a useful if ahistorical volume, Reginald D. Archambault, ed., *John Dewey on Education* (New York, 1964) and examined at length in Melvin C. Baker, *Foundations of John Dewey's Educational Theory* (New York, 1955); Arthur G. Wirth, *John Dewey As Educator* (New York, 1966); and John L. Childs, "The Educational Philosophy of John Dewey," in Schilpp, ed., *Philosophy of John Dewey*, 419-443.

46. "Ethical Principles Underlying Education," *Early Works* 5, 54-83, also reprinted in Archambault, *John Dewey on Education*, 108-38. The quotations are chiefly from the first few and the last few pages.

47. "My Pedagogic Creed," *Early Works* 5, 84-95, also reprinted in Archambault, *John Dewey on Education*, 427-39. The quotation is the last sentence.

48. Frederic C. Howe, *The Confessions of A Reformer* (Chicago, 1967, c. 1925), 16-17.

REJOINDERS

ROBERT M. CRUNDEN

Depending on one's basic approach to the Progressive Era, a student can read John Buenker's essay in at least two ways. To a student of political history and conventional methodology, the essay provides both a large scale overview of political progressivism and a really heroic attempt to reinvigorate a term like "the progressive movement" or its semantic relatives in the face of great skepticism from other scholars. But to a student of cultural history with wide interdisciplinary interests, his argument suffers from many of the same problems that dogged its predecessors.

Buenker's emphasis on "shifting coalitions" implicitly assumes that voting behavior, the social currents that affect it, and the legislative results of it, are the core of progressivism. I do not believe it, but for those that do he provides more knowledge of state and local political activity than any other writer on the subject. But ultimately, his analysis falls before the same objections that Peter Filene has raised about the term "progressive movement": it is too vague, it includes both too much and too little, it does not separate progressives successfully from their opponents, nor does it separate reformers in that period from reformers in other periods. "Shifting coalitions" could just as easily be used with Whigs or New Dealers, and students are left with a vague feeling that progressives were groups of people supportive of good reforms during a generation or so around the turn of the twentieth century. If that is all that is left of the concept, then I have grave doubt that it is worth using at all. It certainly can have little utility in examining the many educators, philosophers, preachers, and social workers who loom so large in the other two essays. Students have been using concepts like "progressivism" for years to include progressive schools, pragmatic philosophy and the social gospel; political terminology simply cannot handle these subjects adequately.

Even within a political framework, Buenker's entire analysis seems to have unspoken presuppositions which are invalid. Although he never clearly says

so, Buenker seems to believe in an implicit equation: progressivism equals liberalism equals reformism during that period. He has an implicit whiggism that sees all efforts at implementing welfare state measures, for example, as being progressive, when clearly they were not. Most of the efforts at advanced labor legislation or centralized planning during the period were opposed in the strongest language by leading progressives, from Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson on down. Those progressives who survived into the 1930's were often extremely hostile to many New Deal measures, and their positions then were frequently no different from their positions in 1910. The foreign stock ethnic voters Buenker concentrates on may well have voted for progressive candidates, but they were rarely progressives themselves. They were urban liberals, to use a term Buenker has used elsewhere, and they were often in favor of beneficent legislation that ultimately would become law, but they were not thereby progressives in any sense in which I understand the term.

Furthermore, Buenker has slighted the sour side of progressivism. Many of the reforms advocated by progressives would be repellent to modern liberal historians. The imperialism, the racism, the prohibitionism and the narrow fundamentalism of many legitimate progressive leaders and voters are inseparable from the efforts at conservation, financial reform, tariff reduction, initiative, referendum and recall that seem so much more attractive. Furthermore, progressives in no way anticipated modern attitudes toward sexual mores, birth control and abortion legislation, and other aspects of current cultural "liberalism," while leaders of ethnic stock from Margaret Sanger to Emma Goldman often did. To be "progressive" (in general) was not to be "a progressive," (in the context of this book and its time period) and often enough there was a great antagonism between the two. Buenker's assumptions seem to me to deny this.

My other objections are less sweeping and less relevant for students of progressivism. As a student of religious history, I do object to the sociological use and perhaps abuse of a term like "pietism," which generally refers in most books to a specific theological group and attitude that came out of Germany in the seventeenth century; it stressed study of the Bible, and personal religious experience, and disapproved of excessive intellectualism. Buenker uses the term much too broadly, as if at times it were synonymous with "moralistic" or "orthodox" or even simply "Protestant," and this does not seem to me legitimate. I have no idea what an expression like "pietistic, native middle class with its devotion to free enterprise capitalism and legislated morality" means, unless the ideas of Max Weber have undergone a startling transformation, and I find it very hard to assimilate the idea that "pietism had freed the slaves and animated the social gospel. . . ."

This objection leads to a rather broader one. Buenker is trying heroically to tie disparate groups and efforts together, and he thus inevitably uses vaguer

and vaguer terminology as the groups and efforts seem more and more dissimilar. But "shifting coalitions" is not the only vague term in this essay. We read about how "the vast majority of Americans divided between those who demanded forced 'Americanization' and those who trusted to the strength of existing institutions . . .," how "most segments of society" were aroused "to demand tariff revision . . .," and how "most social classes agreed on the broad outlines of the change, while differing on the specifics." Perhaps loose terminology is inseparable from an attempt to combine so many odd political groups together, perhaps not, but these sweeping generalizations seem to me unprovable in any scientific sense, and unlikely to common sense. I doubt very much that most Americans or most members of any given social class articulate coherent positions on much of anything, and if they do, I am not sure how you could prove it. They share values and predispositions and general attitudes, and one can discover these from written records like books, speeches, sermons and editorials, but nothing so specific as Buenker suggests in his essay.

I could pick away at a number of other small matters, but I think that many of my objections can be summed up by a general statement: Buenker attempts to be analytical, but the subject matter is so intractable that he succeeds only in being descriptive. He has in fact described much of importance that went on during the Progressive Era, and few would dispute the concept that shifting coalitions were a recognizable part of progressive politics. But he has not really told us why the events happened when they did, why some areas of legislation were emphasized over others, why progressives seem so different from abolitionists or New Dealers, or why they were like or unlike nonprogressives. I think a cultural explanation that begins with essential concepts of child-rearing and religion can do this, and have indicated how in my own contribution.

Largely because of his positive response to progressive achievements, and because of his essentially cultural approach, I have less quarrel with John Burnham's essay. Burnham has effectively rescued progressive scholarship from the hands of two later generations of liberals and radicals who have been excessively critical and present minded in their approach to the period, and he knows that an emphasis on political matters distorts the progressive contribution to American history. But in working out his position he makes a number of points that seem to me either overly vague or simply erroneous.

I would have thought that Peter Filene's essay, which we all seem to be using as a point of departure, made the use of vague, imprecise terminology something all scholars should avoid. Yet just as Buenker likes terms like "shifting coalitions," Burnham likes to speak of how "a number of streams in American reform coalesced for a few years," and how scholars should "focus on the changes in those years" to get at the meaning of progressivism. He also

persists in using, without defense or real definition, the term "movement" to describe the progressive ethos. American history seems to me to have streams flowing all over its landscape, to have changes going on at all times and places, and to have movements for almost every conceivable cause. But use of this terminology once more does not help students much in separating progressives from nonprogressives, or progressives from earlier or later reformers; nor does anything in progressivism seem to me coherent enough to qualify for a reasonably limited term like "movement," especially after Filene's extensive critique of the term. A movement is not an ethos or a national mood; if this continues we will end by calling everyone progressive who thought he advocated something good while Roosevelt and Wilson were President.

I also question very seriously Burnham's dating of progressivism. I have long assumed that progressivism lasted roughly thirty years, from the founding of Hull-House in 1889 until the defeat of the Versailles Treaty, 1919-1920. As an "ethos" or "ism" it includes a rural phase normally covered by the term "populism," a national and urban phase, and an international phase coinciding with World War I, in which Wilson attempted to extend the progressive vision to Western Europe. To restrict the focus of discussion to a mere decade or so seems to me unhelpful and unnecessary. It also ignores earlier progressive reform efforts in places like Detroit, Toledo and Cleveland, the careers of reformers like John P. Altgeld and Clarence Darrow and their fellow workers in Illinois, and most of Theodore Roosevelt's Presidency. If these are not subjects worthy for inclusion in the term, then I wonder why we bother with the term at all.

Burnham's peculiar attitude toward dating his "movement" also ignores the local circumstances for the mood change he finds from the negative to the positive around 1907. Anyone who has read widely in the personal letters of leading progressives has noticed that such changes occur all of the time, and depend on the success or failure of election campaigns, the success or failure of attempts to pass legislation, the success or failure of a given book or article, the coming or going of a good editor, or whatever. There is surely reason for buoyancy after the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act or the measures of the New Freedom; there is surely no reason for it at all after the defeat of Mayor Tom Johnson of Cleveland, or during the spreading scandal of the Ballinger-Pinchot affair. Progressives had their ups and downs like anyone else in the country, and to pick 1907 seems to me somewhat irrational. Progressivism must be studied as the sum of moralistic, Protestant efforts at change and reform during the period around the turn of the twentieth century; the first institution to make a lasting impact was Hull-House, and the last great attempt at one was the writing of the Versailles Treaty and the construction of a League of Nations.

Yet despite these quarrels, my response to Burnham is essentially positive. He seems to note religious impulses behind his concepts, even when they are not overtly religious, as when he writes that "the inspiration of reform was science," or when he speaks of the "gospel of efficiency and scientific management." I think he overdoes this emphasis on science and organization as a part of progressivism—surely it was going on, and would have gone on had the country never had a progressive public official at all—but when progressives assimilated these forces of modernization they did in fact energize them with religious fervor, as they did everything else they touched. The fervor, not the science and efficiency, remains the core of what is important, and Burnham's recognition that this fervor permeates the country and is essentially nonpolitical makes his essay an important corrective to much of the recent literature.

JOHN D. BUENKER

After listening to two contradictory assessments of the Vietnam situation, President Kennedy reportedly asked if his informants had been in the same country. After reading the three preceding essays, one could hardly blame anyone for asking if the authors "had been" in the same historical era. Our differences in outlook are sharply illustrated by Burnham and Crunden styling as "premature" and a "counsel of despair" the same article that I have used as my point of departure. While I have concentrated upon elaborating and refining Filene's conception of a series of shifting coalitions, they have sought to demonstrate that the reports of the "progressive movement's" demise were, like those of Mark Twain's, greatly exaggerated. What they seem to regard as relegating Progressive Era scholarship to a state of near-anarchy, I see as freeing historians from a self-imposed ideological strait jacket, permitting them to appreciate the rich diversity and complexity of the reformist impulse. While they have argued that the era's most important events took place in the private sector, I have contended that the political system provided the most productive mechanism for the resolution of socioeconomic, ethnoreligious, and geographic conflicts.

Although I heartily agree with them that much of the reformist activity was culturally based, I would insist that there were a variety of culturally generated responses, some of which were highly antagonistic to one another. Their essays have deepened my understanding of the period's intellectual climate and of the importance of nonpolitical efforts in reforming society, but they have not really altered my fundamental convictions that the Progressive Era was characterized much more by diversity than by unity and that the political system provided the best available mechanism for accommodating vast social change. I am under no illusion that I have converted them either, but I would like to note that there is ample room inside my interpretation for a "movement" such as they posit. There seems little, if any,

place inside their "progressive movement" for the diversity of reform efforts that many other scholars have advanced.

Although Burnham acknowledges that there were "reform streams" that "coalesced for a few years," he and Crunden still insist that there was a single "progressive movement" and an ideology called "progressivism." It is difficult to discuss the notion of a movement or an ideology without getting into a semantical quagmire. My colleagues consider Filene's attempt to subject these notions to some definitional rigor as an effort to construct straw men that he could easily destroy. One can expand or contract the parameters of a movement or an ideology to suit one's purposes, but there are some common sense limits. No logical definition of either could ever be so elastic as to contain polar opposites or support contradictions, and the "progressive movement" and "progressivism" have been asked to do just that, again and again. Daniel Levine had to examine only a half-dozen individuals and organizations—Jane Addams, Samuel Gompers, Robert LaFollette, Edgar Gardner Murphy, Albert Beveridge, and the Civic Federation of Chicago—to find contradictory values, goals, and programs. Except for Gompers, a British born cigarmaker and labor leader of Dutch Jewish descent who apparently falls outside the pale, the remainder came from the kinds of backgrounds held by my collaborators to be prerequisite to membership in the "progressive movement." Yet Levine found even these to disagree over such basic issues as the nature of man and society. As Burnham himself notes, John Braeman's profiles of seven prominent political "progressives" found some looking forward and others backward, the latter an odd posture for a "progressive."

Conscious of this problem, Crunden has sought to divorce the notion of "progressivism" from the content of given issues such as prohibition, insisting that a general receptivity to innovation and a moral tone were more important. Such a view acknowledges that "progressives" did in fact take contradictory positions on the most divisive cultural issues of the entire era. If one qualified as a progressive solely because he was open to some kind of social change, regardless of content or direction, so long as he followed his own moral sense, then the period was even more open ended than I have alleged. In any case, to call something a movement or an ideology when its adherents took contradictory positions on the crucial issues of the day does violence to even the most elastic definition.

The efforts of Burnham and Crunden to define the terms "progressivism" and "progressive movement" are sophisticated and thought provoking, yet they remain basically elaborations of WASP middle class interpretations, and suffer from most of the same problems that Filene found in similar efforts. Crunden defines "progressivism" as a "frame of mind" shaped by moral and emotional attitudes. Such a definition suffers, as Crunden to his credit candidly admits, from two defects: it presents ideas divorced from actions and

creates an imaginary entity—a “collective mind” that would not have been acceptable in its entirety to any single individual. To buttress his views, he borrows the notion of a “moral frame of reference” from psychology. As David Thelen perceptively noted several years ago, such cross discipline borrowing is dangerous because the theories of one discipline often do not encompass the data of another and because the more inclusive the model becomes the further removed it becomes from historical reality. Even granting the applicability of these theories to Addams and Dewey, and even conceding that they mirrored the experience of thousands of other reformers, it still seems valid to doubt that this all added up to a “frame of mind” that sustained all the varied reform efforts of the period. Especially since he limits his account to Addams and Dewey’s pre-Progressive Era years and contents himself with a few tenuous references to the settlement house movement and progressive education, there is little effort to demonstrate the typicality of their experience or the extent of their influence on others. It is true, as Crunden says, that these can’t be measured statistically, and I would be the last to insist that only the quantifiable is real or important, but an idea system said to sustain the age must demonstrate much more evidence of widespread acceptance.

Burnham is a bit more expansive in defining a “progressive ethos.” He does demonstrate some necessary corrections between thought and actions, but not enough to sustain his entire argument. Ethos means the characteristic and distinguishing attitudes and habits of a racial, political, occupational or other group. The equation of “ethos” and “progressivism” indicates the author’s identification of reform with the outlook of a limited group set off by socioeconomic or cultural differences from the rest of society. Yet he posits their beliefs in “optimism, leadership by an enlightened elite, environmentalism, romantic individualism, and cultural nationalism” as the universal tenets of the entire reform era. That difficulty aside, his “progressive ethos” involves many apparent contradictions: How does a “religious or quasi-religious vision of democracy” square with a commitment to “leadership by an enlightened elite?” How is “romantic individualism,” which certainly seems to imply diversity, possible inside a commitment to “cultural nationalism” which seems to insist upon conformity? How does a “quasi-religious vision of democracy” pervade an age that disfranchised blacks, restricted immigration, and turned much of the municipal governance over to social elites? How does a belief in environmentalism explain the rise of eugenics, segregation, or immigration restriction? If optimism is the sole province of reformers, does that mean that conservatives were pessimistic? They presumably were so optimistic that there was no need for reform. In brief, delineation of a “progressive ethos” involves us in ideas that are either too general to differentiate their holders from other segments of society, or else fraught with paradox

and contradiction. Professor Burnham notes that "romantic individualism" often did not square with environmentalism and that "progressive" views on foreign policy were paradoxical," but "dove-tailed well together as versions of 'national interest.' " But what about the debates over imperialism, U.S. entry into World War I, the Versailles Treaty, and the League of Nations? It seems remarkable to me that, in their delineation of key progressive ideas, neither Burnham nor Crunden include the one idea that appeared on almost every list of both contemporaries and historians—the willingness to use government to right social wrongs.

My colleagues have failed to define "progressivism" for the same reason everyone else has—because the reformist ideas of the era, like those of any other period in history, were paradoxical and contradictory. When journalist William Hard and the *Nation* ran a contest in 1924 to define "progressivism," they found that although their respondents believed there was such an ideology, they differed widely in their definitions. About all they agreed upon was that "progressives" wanted to provide the underprivileged with the means of achieving human dignity, to make the institutions of government more responsive to the needs of all citizens, and to shape the economy to serve the public interest. No one has ever successfully unified the ideological content, or even the direction, of the hodgepodge that went by the name of the New Deal either. Where would one begin to define the oft-used term "liberalism" today? Does it support the continued expansion of federal influence or a return to local government? Does it advocate the use of American power to promote international justice or letting nations work out their own destinies? Does liberalism favor racial integration or does it believe in the preservation of cultural and structural pluralism? I have on my desk a book of essays written by members of the Americans for Democratic Action in 1965, entitled *The Crossroads Papers*. The A.D.A. is an acknowledged "liberal" organization and its members supposedly have a high degree of social and ideological homogeneity, yet the essays reflect all the contradictions and paradoxes I have suggested. The foreign policy section contains pieces by Hans Morgenthau and Hubert Humphrey, the latter on "Peace and Disarmament."

Both of my colleagues put a very large stress on the argument that, despite the apparent discrepancies, individual reformers and their contemporaries believed and acted on the assumption that there were "progressives," "progressivism," and a "progressive movement." Self-perceptions, or those of contemporaries immersed in the milieu of the times, often mistake the part for the whole, casting an entire era in the perspective of the people making the judgment. Our perceptions of the Progressive Era have been sharply influenced by contemporary accounts and memoirs, almost uniformly left by WASP, middle class intellectuals who have overemphasized their own influ-

ence. One can discern with a reasonably high degree of internal consistency the ideology of an individual reformer and, with somewhat less certitude, the credo of a reformist organization like the A.D.A., the National Municipal League, or the Child Labor Committee. Even these often vary significantly over time. Beyond that the nature of the game changes, both quantitatively, and qualitatively to finding areas of agreement and accommodation, both in the public and private sector, for individuals and groups of varying backgrounds and beliefs.

If my collaborators' efforts to define "progressivism," like those of every other serious scholar, end in either excessive generality or contradiction, their efforts to define the composition and nature of a "progressive movement" end up as far too restrictive. Although each approaches the problems of membership somewhat uniquely, both fall into traps that have claimed many a capable scholar before them. Crunden's discussion of the membership of the "progressive movement" is hard to credit. His analyses of Dewey and Addams are penetrating and fascinating, and show how these two key individuals "achieved their own sense of identity," and how their personal problems became institutionalized into progressive education and the settlement house movement. Even conceding that thousands of others may have similar experiences and resolve them by involvement in reform efforts, though, it still seems fair to say that these case studies do not show very effectively "how leaders can focus a whole nation on certain policies and goals," "why people found them worthy of emulation," or how their private problems became "public issues with political, social, economic, and cultural consequences." Changing the focus of attention from group to individual behavior does not so much make the problems and contradictions disappear, as it does ignore the crucial question of mass support for reform efforts. Burnham approaches the issue of membership in the tradition of collective biography. He bases his perceptions on Otis Graham's sample of old progressives in the New Deal Era and on other studies of the "leadership within philanthropy and social work, within health and technical reform, and within many other specific areas." The number of his sample is undetermined. There can be little doubt that the membership of these organizations had the characteristics that he notes, or that upper middle class reform organizations had many connections, or that they played a major role in many reform efforts. I only dispute that they were "the progressive movement," any more than were any of the other segments of society that have been advanced as such. Their unaided efforts, or those of any other slice of society, could not even begin to account for the multiplicity of activity during the era or for the zeal for change that permeated nearly every level of American life. Burnham has joined numerous other scholars in delineating "a progressive movement," but he has certainly not discovered "the progressive movement."

Membership problems aside, my colleagues have made a very valuable contribution to our understanding of the era by defining the nature of their "movement" as cultural rather than socioeconomic. Much of the debate over the nature of the reformist activity of the period has revolved around whether it was strictly a "middle class" phenomenon or one that also involved other "classes." As befits such discussions in an American context, the term "class" has been used in a very loose fashion, often having connotations far afield from the purely socioeconomic. Frequently, it has been modified by such terms as white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, Yankee Protestant or British Protestant, thus indicating an awareness that (1) the middle class was heavily British Protestant in derivation and (2) that the issues of the Progressive Era were not just socioeconomic in nature. Culture is clearly much broader than class and encompasses much more of the total human experience, including many socioeconomic considerations. Cultural issues generally affect people more deeply and personally than economic matters, and call forth much more prodigious responses. Rationalists have been prone to stigmatize much of culturally derived behavior as "irrational," in contrast to self-interested, "rational," economic and political actions. Many scholars are now insisting upon a frank recognition that cultural background profoundly influences human and group behavior, and that such actions are not necessarily irrational. Political scientists have long recognized that ethnocultural considerations are at least as important as socioeconomic ones in influencing voting behavior. In the Progressive Era, especially on certain culturally charged issues, they were often more important, and I am pleased that my colleagues have brought culture to the forefront of the discussion.

Burnham's culture is a mixture of WASPism and what Robert Wiebe has called the "search for order" by bureaucrats and professionals. For Crunden it has a much more religious cast, but is still fundamentally White, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant. Such an interpretation is much too restrictive on two counts. First of all, it posits the existence of an "occupational man" or "religious man" who is as far removed from the real world as is "economic man." Human thoughts and actions are not entirely culturally determined any more than they are economically determined; a person's attitudes are influenced by his or her intensely personal mixture of ethnic, religious, educational, geographic, social, economic, physical, and sexual elements. He or she responds to the issues of the day with his or her total personality, not in a truncated or compartmentalized fashion. Probably the most satisfactory characterization of human behavior yet devised is Milton Gordon's conception of "ethclass," seeing the individual as a hybrid of cultural, socioeconomic, educational, and geographic influences. Issues with a heavy cultural cast heighten one's sense of kinship with those of similar ethnic and religious background, but predominantly economic or geographical questions call

forth different responses and produce different alignments. Less clearly defined or more complex questions set off a mental and emotional tug of war within individuals and groups that each has to resolve. Class and cultural considerations might be reinforcing in a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant intellectual or technocrat, but cause serious psychic conflict if that intellectual or technocrat were an Irish Catholic or an Orthodox Jew. Theories of thought and behavior based upon a single wellspring—be it class, occupation, religion, or ethnic group—fail to account for the complexity of the human personality and the potential multiplicity of individual and group responses.

Similarly, Burnham's frequent insistence on altruism and purity of motive on behalf of his subjects seems a bit one dimensional. Perhaps people really are more skeptical today than they were during the Progressive Era, but one can hardly believe that human nature or group behavior has changed all that much. People act from a mixture of selfish and altruistic motives; few are introspective enough to try to separate the two. One might grant that settlement house workers or ministers are generally more altruistic than businessmen or labor leaders, or that the National Child Labor Committee is more concerned with the human condition than the National Association of Manufacturers, but the dichotomy can easily be overdrawn, especially with less extreme examples. Who can say for sure that the American Federation of Labor's opposition to child labor was motivated solely by a desire to eliminate unfair competition while the middle class members of the National Child Labor Committee were concerned only with the welfare of minors? Who can state with finality whether social service or personal fulfillment was more important to a settlement house worker? Were such social workers as Frances Perkins, Harry Hopkins, and Belle Moskowitz altruistic during the Progressive Era and self-interested during the New Deal? Couldn't Senator Robert F. Wagner, a key figure in both reform eras, have acted from his own social vision as well as from his role as a representative of working class interests? Couldn't "progressives" often have been self-interested not in a narrow monetary sense, but rather in the broader vein of trying to impose their world view on the rest of society? Is it really altruistic to do what you think is right for other people, even when they don't concur? Wouldn't it be more altruistic to respect their differences and needs? Even Burnham acknowledges that voluntary reform organizations have been frequently used by the upper classes as a form of social control. As Robert Dahl has observed, was it a coincidence that Plato wanted a government run by philosophers? Progressive Era reformers, like those everywhere, acted from a mixture of motives, both selfish and unselfish.

More basically, I find my collaborators' view of culture and reform too confining because they leave room for the operation of only a single cultural system. WASP middle class culture was certainly the wellspring of many

American reformers and the cultural mainstream of the era. But America is a multicultural society and the impulse to right social wrongs did not flow out of only one value system. Scholars have documented the contributions of numerous individuals and groups proceeding from far different cultural backgrounds—Jews, Socialists, midwestern German Catholics, big city Irish politicians, organized labor, immigrant national societies, Southern populists, and a variety of others. Support for numerous reform efforts flowed as logically from their ethos, as it did from that of the old-stock, Protestant, middle class. On a wide range of issues, people from varying cultural backgrounds were able to transcend their parochial boundaries and cooperate on constructive efforts in both the public and private sector. The impasse usually came when the “progressives” described by my two colleagues tried to force racial, ethnic, and religious minorities to conform to WASP norms. These variations in response occurred because the nation’s minorities have acculturated and assimilated to the American mainstream at three fairly distinct levels.

By far the most rapid pace of absorption has taken place in the political system, precisely because minorities of all types have been able to participate effectively without surrendering much of their cultural baggage. The system is so jurisdictionally fragmented that minorities can capture a precinct or a ward and build a power base from which to bargain for benefits, extending their influence through alliances with other such groups. Political parties consistently keep ethnic and religious sensibilities in mind when constructing tickets and platforms. Political activity requires acceptance of only a few general principles, many of which serve to perpetuate pluralism. Little is required in the way of cultural conformity so long as minorities accept the results of elections and roll call votes, abide by duly passed laws and judicial decisions, and seek to effect change by established constitutional processes. Within that general framework racial, ethnic, and religious minorities can retain their own political styles, practice “group patronage” and “recognition politics,” and work to defend their cultural proclivities against outside attack.

Absorption into the culture of technology that pervades life in an industrial, urban society has proceeded at a somewhat slower rate. This culture of technology, which sociologists have termed the *gesellschaft*, seeks to reorganize society primarily along functional and occupational lines so that people might better play their assigned role in the industrial system. It has been defined as the “reordering of human relations by rational procedures designed to maximize efficiency based upon occupational function rather than ideological faith or primordial relationships.” Cultural values and practices that inhibit such reorganization are regarded as archaic and irrational; they must be quickly shed if the individual or group is to survive and prosper in an urban, industrial environment. Basic literacy in English, for example, is an

absolute requirement. Learning to live by the time clock and the stop watch, instead of by the slowly changing rhythm of the seasons, is also a necessity. Getting and holding a job often means working wives and children, placing great strains on paternalistic family structures. Occupational and residential mobility replace the need for established roots; individual achievement becomes the primary determinant of status and success rather than fulfilling one's ethnoreligious role. The acquisition and consumption of a sufficient amount of material goods to keep the economy expanding becomes an important duty of every person, no matter how nonmaterialistic his cultural traditions. The rapidly expanding communications media were already beginning to create a national mass culture that cut across ethnoreligious and geographical lines. Occupational and income status created new communities of interest among taxpayers, city dwellers, agrarians, skilled workers, small businessmen, consumers, and westerners. Where the issues were socio-economic or geographical in nature, these new communities of interest facilitated cooperation and coalition among peoples from far different cultural backgrounds.

Yet, it is important to emphasize that the culture of technology and these new communities of interest were still in their formative stages. Even today they have not completely replaced or destroyed ethnocultural groupings and world views. Vast numbers of rural and small town Americans remained relatively unexposed to the culture of technology or were fighting a determined rear guard action against it. Millions of recent immigrants remained suspended between two worlds—living in the culture of technology on the job, but retreating to more familiar and comfortable life styles when the day's work was done. Many influential thinkers still questioned the tenets of this new dispensation and reasserted older humanistic and religious values. The culture of technology was clearly most acceptable to bureaucrats and professionals. Much of it was also highly compatible with the culture advanced by my two colleagues as the essence of "progressivism." Millions of other Americans embraced its tenets selectively and tentatively, cooperating in so far as this new world view mandated decent living and working conditions, equal rights, equitable taxation, the best possible goods and services at reasonable prices, the regulation of child and female labor, or the promotion of economic security. When advocates of the culture of technology insisted upon changes in life style, family structure, eating and drinking habits, the upbringing and education of children, and other such intensely personal matters, ethnocultural and regional minorities voiced their unalterable opposition.

By far the slowest pace of acculturation has taken place at this third level—the personal, primary stratum of consciousness that sociologists have dubbed *gemeinschaft*. This is the cultural milieu into which every individual is born

and whose essentials are inculcated by family, neighbors, and ethnoreligious groups. It is here that a person's fundamental attitudes toward sex, alcohol, food, marriage, child rearing, success, joy, sorrow, work, leisure, death, and the whole range of human experience are instilled. Education, physical and social mobility, and other contacts with the outside world may alter or refine these views, but they never completely displace them. Arthur Mann has recently argued that there are at least five degrees of acculturation and assimilation—total identifiers, partial identifiers, disaffiliates, hybrids, and the loneliest crowd. It is clear that there is a cultural continuum along which each person finds some position for himself. No matter where one stands on this continuum, attacks upon the culture from which he has proceeded heighten his sense of ethnoreligious kinship while they sharpen a minority's determination to preserve its heritage and identity.

WASP culture was clearly the *gemeinschaft* of the middle class reformers they have identified as "progressives." I happily concede Crunden's observation that Theodore Roosevelt was not kidding when he spoke to the Progressive Party convention in the WASP idiom. The party was primarily a vehicle for that culture—it was largely for this reason that it enjoyed such limited success and had such a short life. Not even all the leading settlement house workers supported it. Those who did follow the Bull Moose because of the Social and Industrial section of the party's platform, like Jane Addams, had to accept Roosevelt's naval expansion program and lily white Southern strategy. So long as the WASP middle class reformers allowed other groups to maintain much of their identity and culture, relying upon industrialization, urbanization, the mass media, or the passage of generations to promote acculturation, they left broad areas for accommodation and cooperation. When they grew impatient and sought to force conformity to WASP norms through Americanization programs, immigration restriction, Sunday Blue laws, mandatory public school attendance, and the segregation and disfranchisement of blacks and Orientals, they provoked ferocious opposition among cultural minorities.

Despite Burnham's forceful explanation I question the legitimacy of this WASP middle class *Kulturkampf*. Is it really "sentimental" to respect cultural differences or an important test of altruism, humanitarianism, and cosmopolitanism? Isn't a "progressivism" that seeks to destroy the identity or culture of minorities seriously flawed? Are efforts to mandate cultural conformity "hardly relevant" when they limited areas of cooperation with cultural minorities in the promotion of social justice, raised serious doubts about the purity of motivation and broadness of outlook of many WASP middle class reformers, and provided one of the major causes for the eventual break-up of the Progressive Era? If "progressives" crusaded for cultural conformity, what do we call the people who opposed such efforts, people who only a

decade or two later would be heralded as "liberals?" What do we call John Dewey who wrote to Horace Kallen supporting the latter's insistence upon cultural pluralism, noting that he had never cared for the melting pot metaphor and believed in the maintenance of distinctive literary and artistic traditions and in "genuine assimilation to one another—not to Anglo-Saxondom"? What do we label Randolph Bourne who wrote in 1916 that "ethnic diversity would enable the United States to develop a style of life and thought more fulfilling than that of any of the single, national cultures of Europe and America," replacing parochialism with a "cosmopolitan spirit." What of the many influential intellectuals and artists, many of them WASPs, whom David Hollinger has recently shown were already developing a new "cosmopolitan nationalism" during the Progressive Era that would emerge as the dominant view among the left-of-center intelligentsia by the 1940's? What, for that matter, do we call the spokesmen for cultural minorities who insisted upon their right to live according to their own lights? Cultural issues were vitally important during the Progressive Era, but the attempt to equate enforced conformity with "progressivism" starkly demonstrates the pitfalls of trying to posit the existence of a single ideology or a single movement.

Despite the efforts of my two fellow historians to prove the contrary, then, I stand by my original position that the weight of evidence argues strongly against the existence of a unified "progressivism" or a single "progressive movement." What I see instead is a period of approximately two decades characterized by the efforts of Americans from a variety of socioeconomic, geographic, and ethnoreligious backgrounds to come to grips with life in an urban, industrial, multicultural society. Each individual and each group responded to this new environment out of its own peculiar mixture of ethnoreligious, socioeconomic, and geographic circumstances, and with the usual human blend of self-interest and altruism, seeking to strengthen its own position while advancing the general welfare. Although some individuals were able to exert a great deal of influence on their generation, reform efforts for most people dictated banding together with those who shared part of their experience and outlook. Although some organizations were able to effect meaningful, but limited, change through their own unaided efforts, larger scale reform demanded cooperation and coalition with groups holding compatible motives and aims. Although the building of coalitions for change was evident primarily in the political realm, where it was an absolute necessity, examples of cooperation across socioeconomic, cultural, and geographic lines were common in the private sector as well. The National Civic Federation, which sought to foster industrial harmony through conciliation, had an almost equal membership of business and labor leaders. Settlement workers in Chicago and elsewhere cooperated actively and continuously with organized labor during negotiations and strikes. Unions and consumer groups regularly

worked together to foster better standards and lower rates, while other predominantly middle class organizations such as the Women's Trade Union League consistently operated in concert with religious, labor, consumer, and even business leaders, and social workers. While these and other private sector reform efforts undoubtedly deserve more attention than I gave them, it is still true that even outside the political realm, WASP middle class organizations frequently had to coalesce with other cultural and socioeconomic groups to achieve constructive results.

Historians have focused too narrowly on the political history of the Progressive Era, and, as Crunden says, "to examine political behavior by itself as an index to the culture of a period is to examine a part and mistake it for the whole." But the new political history that has been responsible for so much of our enhanced understanding of the diversity of the era is anything but narrow in focus. It has gotten away from national politics to state and local, has examined mass electoral behavior instead of the actions of leaders, and has documented the political importance of the very ethnocultural factors that my colleagues place at the forefront of the reformist impulse. If it is wrong to judge an entire culture by just the index of political behavior, it is also misleading to try to gauge it without considering that dimension. It is still amazing, despite all the focus on political history, that we are only recently beginning to get any real understanding of who voted for reform candidates and proposals, and why. If, in fact, WASP middle class reformers eschewed politics, might that not as likely have diminished dramatically their impact and significance? Does not shifting the focus so completely off politics and onto voluntary private organizations all but guarantee the pre-eminence of the WASP middle class in reform activities? As Burnham candidly acknowledges, that was their style and *modus operandi*, a means of exercising social control over groups whom they might not have been able to beat at electoral politics. The new political history has raised grave doubts about the political importance and the "progressiveness" of the WASP middle class; the Progressive Party has been relegated to a very minor role. Clearly anyone claiming that progressive reform was the exclusive province of the WASP middle class will find little support for that notion in the political realm, and can build a much more convincing case in the private sector.

Even so, the perceived dichotomy between the two approaches is overdrawn because most activists, WASP middle class or otherwise, operated in both sectors, either concurrently or sequentially. No private organization could exert its influence over any matter as widely as government could, and the latter's hostility could negate activities in the private sector. The experience of the settlement house workers, people who most certainly fit my colleagues' mold, was very typical. Certainly they did not abandon their nonpolitical activities, but worked for complementary goals in both spheres.

Even progressive education had to involve political action, unless one was not interested in reforming the public school system. A great many historians have made the initiation of political activity by heretofore private groups a major distinguishing feature of the Progressive Era, and it is contrary to a mountain of evidence to insist that it was characterized by a retreat to the private sector.

Nor do I agree that political progressivism was entirely unproductive. The difficulty with the whole debate over the legacy of the Progressive Era is that it has rarely been based upon a careful analysis of the operation of the political process. What were the actual effects of the income tax, the direct election of senators, woman suffrage, business regulation, workmen's compensation, and the like? Against what standards and by what methods should their effectiveness be gauged? Can we ever say for certain what might have happened if they hadn't been enacted? If they failed to live up to expectations was it because they were designed to do so, because they were poorly conceived, because the public mood that sustained their enactment changed, because they were undermined by later conservatives, or because later officials stood still for actions that the reformers of the Progressive Era would have openly denounced? Would the persistent inequities that plague us today have been even more blatant without them?

Much more serious analysis must be done before anyone can confidently assess the overall success or failure of the era's political reform efforts. Adverse judgments on the Progressive Era, especially as compared to the New Deal, have usually compared apples to oranges—"a middle class Anglo-Saxon progressivism with the working-class, immigrant-based New Deal" possessing a "social democratic tinge." If, as I have suggested, the Progressive Era contained most of the same elements in somewhat different mixture, then perhaps the two reform eras, occurring less than a generation apart, were not really so different after all. Clearly the New Deal came in response to the massive dislocation of the Great Depression, a disaster that illuminated much more starkly the problems of an urban, industrial, multicultural society. The New Deal's primary, though not exclusive, arena was clearly the federal government, while the Progressive Era's, except for a few years, was state and local government and, to be sure, the private sector. Groups that played a somewhat minor role in the earlier period, such as organized labor, moved much more to center stage in the 1930's. Many key figures in the New Deal, however, did their basic training in state and local government during the Progressive Era. The "social democratic tinge" of the New Deal was a logical outgrowth of many programs originated on the state and local levels by a variety of groups during the Progressive Era. The few electoral analyses of the Progressive Era indicate that labor-welfare-oriented reformers during the earlier period had constituencies with many similarities to the New Deal coal-

tion, allowing for the greater strength of ethnocultural factors. In short, recognition of the complex nature of the reform process during the Progressive Era may go a long way toward increasing our ability to judge both its legacy and its relation to succeeding efforts to remake society.

The Progressive Era was a vital period in American history—the first full scale effort of our geographically vast, multicultural nation to adjust to urban, industrial life. To lavish attention only upon the response of one segment of society, no matter how capable or influential, is to fail to come to grips with the essence of that experience. Any comprehensive definition of that seminal era must seek to encompass all the diverse groups, motives, and programs that were clearly interacting, and to define the boundaries of their cooperation. I do not claim to have provided such a comprehensive definition, but I do hope that I have suggested a framework and an outlook in which the task can be seriously undertaken.

JOHN C. BURNHAM

In a way the most striking aspect of these essays is the basic agreement among the three scholars. They know what people of the early years of this century knew and said: something unusual was going on. That something was the progressive movement. It did exist, and with important consequences.

Professor Buenker is correct in noting that the movement consisted of shifting alliances. No one ever pretended that it was a "movement" in the sense of a 1930's Marxist. But any simplistic or monolithic interpretation of progressivism is no longer tenable and never should have been. The pity is that Professor Buenker does not extend his view to include the mainstream of American reform in that period, the areas of social, economic, and cultural life that I survey briefly in my essay—a mainstream that is not without precedent, as Alice Felt Tyler showed many years ago in *Freedom's Ferment*. For in the twentieth century, too, much more was going on besides political maneuvering and the balancing of interests.

Professor Buenker is, in fact, concerned primarily with economic conditions and the power relationships that he contends affected or could have affected bread-and-butter issues. His concern is with whether or not each American was privately comfortable, not with what the aggregate private actions amounted to. Fundamentally he believes that private needs and motivations determined progressive coalitions. He thus leaves out the important aspect of the reality of those years: the genuine, and not altogether naive, attempt to be altruistic and socially responsible that I describe in my essay. For, beyond shifting coalitions, the progressives operated, like all humans, on different levels simultaneously, and to reduce them all pretty much to one level—the lowest—is to remove analysis from actuality. Confusing the motives of even the Anti-Saloon League with those of the National Association of Manufacturers takes the sense away from progressivism. To neglect the active idealism of the progressives is not only to lose their uniqueness and

the special flavor that they gave to their own era but to obscure the tie that bound them together.

The other major point around which Professor Buenker and I read the evidence differently is the respective places of voluntaristic and political means in the reform efforts. He suggests that voluntarism was primary in time and that the progressives turned to government after voluntarism had failed. Such a view overlooks both the continuing complicated ambivalence of the progressives' feelings about political processes and the fact that voluntarism flourished because it was political action that was ineffective, indeed, corrupting. The fiasco of 1912 sent many a temporary political activist back to the voluntary group, and events following World War I opened the eyes of many others. On the state and local levels the chances for success, as I pointed out, seemed to be enhanced by the power wielded by industrial leaders and independent organizations, as opposed to power held by politicians.

A new force that did develop (and which was disrupting the plans of reformers) was, not effectiveness of the political processes, but the victory of private selfish standards of the New Immigrants and their children, allied with the new liberals like Kallen and Stearns. Professor Buenker is so sure that prohibition, purity, and uplift in general are not appropriate social goals that he fails to see the legitimacy of much of the progressives' actual program. In the end, for example, the progressives' legacy to the 1920's was greatly increased freedom of discussion, while the effective forces favoring censorship at that time, as Paul Boyer has shown, came precisely from the New Immigrants groups' attempt by law to force a life style on their fellow Americans. Professor Buenker in fact greatly underestimates the Women's Christian Temperance Union by ignoring what they stood for besides temperance—and particularly the positive aspects of their vision of a better society. Indeed, much of my argument with Professor Buenker grows out of his unwillingness to grant that extension of the WASP style of life could have represented an important change in American life. The idea of sweat shop and tenement reform legislation is a very limited notion of the possibilities of both goals and means that spurred people into action at that time. The power of selfish interest alliances looks pale indeed beside the demonstrated power of science, the expert, and, for a few years, good will. One need not agree with the progressive goals to recognize the power—and the potential.

Professor Crunden's reading of those years is very close to my own in emphasizing the Protestant life style as an element in progressivism. But his exposition leaves a number of questions unanswered. He is talking more about a generation and less about a social movement. He speaks really to the fervor and commitment of Americans, the personal basis for what they did. He leaves out the basis in the objective, "real" world, namely, the achievements of science and technology. In exploring the ubiquity of the religious style,

he says little about the organizational proclivities of the progressive generation or their concrete accomplishments.

The fascinating stories of Addams and Dewey do not diminish my distrust of the usefulness of biography, even in an Eriksonian setting. Life histories do help in conveying an understanding of why Protestant religious institutions did not effectively oppose reform but rather often worked in harmony with it in disparate ways. But biography can be misleading and fix attention on side issues or small pieces rather than the central movements. A funny story is told of how John Dewey turned away from experimentation after one day setting the University of Michigan laboratories afire while trying to varnish a brain. Professor Crunden is relatively successful in avoiding such *ad hominem* perspective, but his focus is misleading. Progressivism was a cultural phenomenon and needs no explanation of what occurred in terms other than the actual social and cultural events of those times. The movement did transcend individuals, even leaders, and that fact was what so impressed people then.

Particularly crucially absent from Professor Crunden's portrayal of the Protestant spirit was the specific, commonsense way it worked out in practice: abhorrence of selfishness and self-indulgence. With this formulation such phenomena as the fear of "race suicide," health reform, and thrift classes at the YMCA all show the consistency of both intellect and sentiment that progressives assumed and sensed in their mobilizing guilts. Such facts appear far better in social analysis, or at least collective biography, than in individual lives, although Addams and Dewey do prepare us to understand how unselfishness could fuel the myriad lives it did.

What I miss most in both Professor Buenker's and Professor Crunden's essays is a sense of beginning and ending that would give the progressive movement more precise markings in the stream of history. The one view seems to coincide with life histories, the other with shifting coalitions that existed in the 1890's and again in the 1920's coordinating and compromising interests. The evidence from those times shows that the coalescing and reinforcement that distinguishes the movement can be identified. With an entity thus sharply defined, other changes, such as those following World War II, show up with much greater clarity and take on an added significance in the history of the twentieth century.

Within the coalescing and consequent reinforcement, the unifying ingredient was unselfishness. A traditional ideal, it was new in the Progressive Era in the public form that it took and the scale on which people encountered consciousness of it. Even religion that was essentially selfish was not acceptable to progressives. The businessmen and bosses were attacked not particularly because of institutional defect but because—and when—they utilized

institutions for selfish purposes. Progressives were aware of the growing tension between personal goals and bureaucratic, societal constraints. Voluntarism, as Ellis Hawley points out, was designed to mediate between increasing social demands and individual autonomy. The search for autonomy continues today, but it is not clear that any recent program designed to achieve it has been superior to that of the progressives. It behooves their descendants to take them seriously.

A NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Robert M. Crunden is professor of history and American civilization at the University of Texas at Austin. During 1976-77 he is the first holder of the Bicentennial Chair in American Culture at the University of Helsinki. His earlier books include *The Mind and Art of Albert Jay Nock; A Hero in Spite of Himself: Brand Whitlock in Art, Politics and War*; and *From Self to Society, 1919-1941*. He is currently working on a large-scale study of American culture during the Progressive Era.

John. D. Buenker is a professor of U.S. history at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. He holds his Ph.D. from Georgetown University and has previously taught at Prince Georges College and Eastern Illinois University. He is the author of *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform* and the forthcoming *The Income Tax and the Progressive Era*, and co-author of *Essays in Illinois History, The Study of American History* and the forthcoming *Understanding the Progressive Era and Immigration and Ethnicity: A Guide to the Information Sources*. He has contributed extensively to state and scholarly journals of history, and is currently a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellow.

John C. Burnham is professor of history at The Ohio State University. His publications include *Science in America: Historical Selections* (1972), *Psychoanalysis and American Medicine, 1894-1918* (1967), and numerous articles in leading historical journals. He received his Ph.D. from Stanford University and has taught at Stanford, Claremont Men's College, San Francisco State, and, as Fulbright lecturer, at Melbourne and Tasmania in Australia.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

JOHN D. BUENKER

There is no single work that encompasses the complexity and diversity of the Progressive Era or that synthesizes the vast amount of literature that has appeared in the past two decades. Perhaps the best efforts so far are the collected essays in Lewis Gould, ed., *The Progressive Era* (Syracuse, 1974). The most satisfactory effort by a single author is Samuel P. Hays, *The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1914* (Chicago, 1957), even though it underplays ethnocultural conflicts and the impact of urbanization. It does, however, see the era as a response by the whole of society to industrialism and raises many questions to which recent scholarship has provided better answers. David P. Thelen, *The New Citizenship: Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin, 1885-1900* (Columbia, Mo., 1972), portrays the "progressive movement" as a broad-based coalition of people from all walks of life united as taxpayers, consumers, and citizens. Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search For Order, 1877-1920* (New York, 1967), views the era as a response to the process of modernization, but unfortunately limits his focus to one segment of society—the newly emerging bureaucrats and professionals. There are two recent "problems" books that graphically illustrate the divergence of scholarly opinion: David M. Kennedy, ed., *Progressivism: The Critical Issues* (Boston, 1971) and Arthur Mann, ed., *The Progressive Era* (Hinsdale, Ill., 1975).

Several studies have criticized the native, middle class movement explanation of the reform impulse. William T. Kerr, Jr., "The Progressives in Washington, 1910-1912," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 55 (1964): 16-27; E. Daniel Potts, "The Progressive Profile in Iowa," *Mid-America* 47 (1965): 257-268; Richard B. Sherman, "The Status Revolution and Massachusetts Progressive Leadership," *Political Science Quarterly* 78 (1963): 59-65; and Jack Tager, "Progressives, Conservatives, and the Theory of the Status Revolution," *Mid-America* 48 (1966): 162-175, all argue that the class origins of "re-

formers" differed very little from those of "conservatives" or uninvolved citizens. David P. Thelen, "Social Tensions and the Origins of Progressivism," *Journal of American History* 56 (1969), 323-341, contends that the class origins of a reformer were irrelevant so long as he adhered to a "progressive" outlook. Howard W. Allen, "Geography and Politics: Voting on Reform Issues in the United States Senate, 1911-1916," *Journal of American History* 27 (1961): 216-228, sees regional location as a more important factor than class. Roger Wyman, "Middle-Class Voters and Progressive Reform: The Conflict of Class and Culture," *American Political Science Review* 68 (1974): 488-504, argues that "progressivism" was complex and amorphous, and that its electoral support was constantly shifting. Wyman, "Voting Behavior in Wisconsin during the Progressive Era: A Case Study" (dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1970); Michael P. Rogin and John L. Shover *Political Change in California: Critical Elections and Social Movements, 1890-1966* (Westport, Conn., 1970); and James E. Wright, *The Politics of Populism: Dissent in Colorado* (New Haven, Conn., 1974), all generally deny the existence of urban, middle class electoral support for reform candidates and issues, arguing that urban workers, and even farmers, were often more important. In his "The Social Analysis of American Political History, 1880-1920," *Political Science Quarterly* 80 (1965): 373-394, Samuel P. Hays insists that acceptance of the claims of middle class reformers at face value has prevented historians from recognizing the contributions of other social segments and from acknowledging the importance of noneconomic issues. Daniel Levine, *Varieties of Reform Thought* (Madison, Wis., 1964), denies the existence of any unified progressive ideology, while Peter Filene, "An Obituary for the 'Progressive Movement'," *American Quarterly* 22 (1970): 20-34, gives the same treatment to the movement concept.

Approaching the problem from the other direction, many scholars have claimed reformist credentials for a wide variety of individuals and groups who fell outside of the native, WASP middle class. J. Joseph Huthmacher, "Urban Liberalism and the Age of Reform" *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 49 (1962): 231-241, is the classic statement of urban, ethnic, lower class support for reform, while his "Charles Evans Hughes and Charles Francis Murphy: The Metamorphosis of Progressivism," *New York History* 46 (1965): 25-40, is a convincing case study. Nancy J. Weiss, *Charles Francis Murphy, 1858-1924: Respectability and Responsibility in Tammany Politics* (Northampton, Mass., 1968), presents the nation's most famous political machine in the role of advocate for those same groups. The fullest statement of this view is John D. Buenker, *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform* (New York, 1973). Leslie W. Koepplin, "A Relationship of Reform: Immigrants and Progressives in the Far West" (dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1971), stakes out many areas of cooperation between immigrants and middle class

reformers. Lyle W. Dorsett, "The City Boss and the Reformer: A Reappraisal," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 63 (1972): 150-154, argues convincingly that the reformer-boss dichotomy is worthless since reformers built political machines and bosses supported reform. The crucial relationship between urban professional politicians and reform is discussed from many angles and viewpoints in Bruce M. Stave, ed., *Urban Bosses, Machines, and Progressive Reformers* (Lexington, Mass., 1972), and in Blaine A. Brownell and Warren E. Stickle, eds., *Bosses and Reformers* (Boston, 1973). Herbert Gutman, "Class Status and the Gilded Age Radical: A Reconsideration The Case of a New Jersey Socialist," in Herbert Gutman and Gregory S. Kealey, *Many Pasts: Readings in American Social History* 2: 121-151, develops a convincing rationale for urban, working class reform and builds a bridge between socialists and reformers. Howard Quint, "Political Socialism: The Light That Failed," in Howard Quint, Dean Albertson, and Milton Cantor, *Main Problems in American History*, vol. 2 (Homewood, Ill., 1968), 174-203, assesses socialism's contributions to reform in a favorable light. James W. Weinstein, *The Decline of Socialism in America, 1912-1925* (New York, 1971), demonstrates that there was a significant Socialist movement in the United States during the era and that it exerted an important influence on reform efforts, while Grady McWhiney "Louisiana Socialism in the Early Twentieth Century: A Study of Rustic Radicalism," *Journal of Southern History* 20 (1954): 311-320, shows that socialism also flourished in parts of the rural South.

The contributions of organized labor to reform are detailed by Alexander Saxton, "San Francisco Labor and the Populist and Progressive Insurgencies," *Pacific Historical Review* 34 (1965): 421-438, and by Irwin Yellowitz, *Labor and the Progressive Movement in New York State, 1897-1916* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1965). Philip Gleason, *The Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1968), demonstrates how a very traditional ethnoreligious group pursued social reform in an effort to protect its identity and culture. Despite the present emphasis on the urban origins of reformers, Wayne E. Fuller, "The Rural Roots of the Progressive Leaders," *Agricultural History* 42 (1968): 1-13, still argues that rural and small town origins shaped the outlook of most important reformers. Robert L. Morlan, *Political Prairie Fire: The Non-Partisan League, 1915-1922* (Minneapolis, 1955), shows that rustic reformers sometimes proposed more radical solutions to the era's problems than did their urban counterparts. Paul W. Glad, "Bryan and the Urban Progressives," *Mid-America* 39 (1957), 169-179, compares the rural reform impulse with that in the cities and concludes that the two were basically complementary, while James L. Holt, *Congressional Insurgents and the Party System, 1909-1916* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), contends that the representatives of the midwestern agricultural states

embraced reform out of a combination of sectionalism, partisan politics, and concern for the public welfare. Ann Firor Scott, "A Progressive Wind from the South, 1906-1913," *Journal of Southern History* 29 (1963): 53-71, and Hugh C. Bailey, *Liberalism in the New South: Southern Social Reformers and the Progressive Movement* (Coral Gables, Fla., 1969), both make convincing cases for southern contributions, although limiting their focus largely to the urban middle class. Finally, the attitudes of businessmen toward the era's reformist surge is considered by Albert K. Steigerwalt, *The National Association of Manufacturers, 1895-1914: A Study in Business Leadership* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1964), and Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform: A Study of the Progressive Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962). Wiebe demonstrates that businessmen contributed to many reform causes and argues for a definition of a "progressive" based upon performance rather than ideology or background.

Many recent studies have revealed that the reform impulse in cities took a variety of forms and involved nearly all segments of society. Frank M. Stewart, *A Half-Century of Municipal Reform: The History of the National Municipal League* (Berkeley, Cal., 1950), is an able summary of the "good government" view that urban reform flowed from the efforts of civic-minded professionals, intellectuals and businessmen. Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 55 (1964): 157-169, and James W. Weinstein, "Organized Business and the Commission and Manager Movements," *Journal of Southern History* 28 (1962): 166-182, contend that urban "reform" was led by businessmen and social elites seeking to destroy the political power of the lower classes and to transfer decision-making to a cadre of experts. Jack D. Elenbaas, "The Boss of the Better Class: Henry Leland and the Detroit Citizens League, 1912-1924," *Michigan History* 58 (1974): 132-150; Lee F. Pendergass, "The Formation of a Municipal Reform Movement: The Municipal League of Seattle," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 66 (1975): 13-25, and Bradley R. Rice, "The Galveston Plan of City Government by Commission: The Birth of a Progressive Idea," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 78 (1975): 365-408, all substantiate the Hays-Weinstein thesis. Although this elitist interpretation currently prevails, it has been challenged by several scholars. J. Paul Mitchel, "Boss Speer and the City Functional: Boosters and Businessmen vs. Commission Government in Denver," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 63 (1972): 155-164, demonstrates that business elites in that city were happy with the mayor-council system and bitterly opposed the changeover to commissioners being pushed by the middle class. Melvin G. Holli, *Reform in Detroit: Hazen S. Pingree and Urban Politics* (New York, 1969), presents Pingree as a champion of the city's ethnic working class against the business and social establishment. Holli concludes that there were at least two reformist strains

in most cities—the “structural reformers,” who resemble the Hays-Weinstein model, and the “social reformers,” who parallel Pingree in program, constituency, and tactics. In “Urban Reform in the Progressive Era,” in Gould, ed., *Progressive Era*, 133-152, Holli discusses the evolution of structural reform and contends that it even failed to cut expenditures because of increasing population and social costs. Anthony R. Travis, “Mayor George Ellis: Grand Rapids Political Boss and Progressive Reformer,” *Michigan History* 58 (1974): 101-130, portrays Ellis as a “left-wing” reformer who went even further than Pingree in aiding the lower classes, while retaining the tenuous support of some middle class people. Martin J. Schiesl, “Progressive Reform in Los Angeles under Mayor Alexander, 1909-1913,” *California Historical Quarterly* 54 (1975): 37-55, contends that Alexander, like Pingree, was elected as a “good government,” middle class reformer, and then swung to the left, pressing for labor, welfare, regulatory, and tax reform in the interests of more disadvantaged citizens.

William D. Miller, *Memphis During the Progressive Era, 1900-1917* (Memphis, 1957), and Zane L. Miller, *Boss Cox's Cincinnati: Urban Politics in the Progressive Era* (New York, 1968), both deal with the interaction between urban political machines and reformers. The former shows how middle class reformers smashed one political machine only to make way for a more effective one under Boss Edward H. Crump, while the latter interprets Boss Cox as a highly flexible politician who adjusted to most reform demands. Zane L. Miller emphasizes the importance of geographic factors in forming political attitudes, viewing residence in the center, the zone, or the periphery as more significant than ethnicity or class. James B. Crooks, *Politics and Progress: The Rise of Urban Progressivism in Baltimore, 1895-1911* (Baton Rouge, La., 1968), stresses middle class involvement, but also notes the contribution of the city's Democratic political boss. John J. Duffy, “Charleston Politics in the Progressive Era” (dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1963) describes the failure of middle class “bonos” as reformers and their replacement by an ethnic-labor-saloonkeeper coalition headed by an Irish Catholic mayor. Richard M. Bernard and Bradley R. Rice, “Political Environment and the Adoption of Progressive Municipal Reform,” *Journal of Urban History* 1 (1975): 149-174, build an urban reform model which graphically illustrates the complexity of the process.

Similarly, most studies of the Progressive Era on the state level have revealed significant diversity. Richard Abrams, *Conservatism in a Progressive Era: Massachusetts Politics, 1900-1912* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), details the failure of middle class progressivism in the state, while acknowledging the more radical “insurgent” thrust of the ethnic working class. Richard B. Sherman underscores this difference in “Charles Sumner Bird and the Progressive Party in Massachusetts,” *New England Quarterly* 33 (1960): 325-340,

and "Foss of Massachusetts: Demagogue vs. Progressive," *Mid-America* 43 (1961): 75-94. Ransom E. Noble stresses the activities of the middle class New Idea Republicans in *New Jersey Progressivism Before Wilson* (Princeton, 1946), while Joseph F. Mahoney, "New Jersey Politics After Wilson: Progressivism in Decline," (Dissertation, Columbia University, 1964), focuses on the activities of the urban, ethnic, working-class-based Democrats. Edward Levine, *Theodore Francis Green: The Rhode Island Years* (Providence, 1963), details the cooperation of a Yankee aristocrat-reformer with ethnic-based Democratic politicians. Hoyt L. Warner, *Progressivism in Ohio, 1897-1917* (Columbus, O., 1964), illustrates the broad-based nature of reformist efforts there, but does not draw any interpretive conclusions. Robert S. Maxwell, *LaFollette and the Rise of the Progressives in Wisconsin* (Madison, Wis., 1956), and Herbert Margulies, *The Decline of the Progressive Movement in Wisconsin, 1890-1920* (Madison, 1968), both stress the differences in program and constituency, even within the progressive Republican Party, between the LaFollette and McGovern years. They and Wyman and Thelen differ significantly over the nature of Wisconsin reform.

Robert S. LaForte, *Leaders of Reform: Progressive Republicans in Kansas, 1900-1916* (Lawrence, Kan., 1974), reveals the dynamic reform process there, concluding that reform was something different in each state. Carl H. Chrislock, *The Progressive Era in Minnesota, 1899-1918* (Minneapolis, 1972), portrays reform as coming in two waves, a middle-class-organized labor-moderate phase succeeded by a farmer-miner-Socialist-radical period. Charles N. Glaab, "The Failure of North Dakota Progressivism," *Mid-America* 39 (1957): 195-209, describes an almost identical phenomenon producing, as it did in Minnesota, the Non-Partisan League. Fred L. Greenbaum, *Fighting Progressive: A Biography of Edward P. Costigan* (Washington, D.C., 1973), deals with the interaction of two distinct reform thrusts—the progressive Republicans led by Costigan and the urban-labor-oriented drive centered in the Democratic and Socialist Parties. In *Populism to Progressivism in Alabama* (Princeton, 1969), Sheldon Hackney analyzes the interaction between urban, middle class "progressives" and planters, business leaders, and former Populists. While he denies that there was a direct line from Populism to Progressivism there, Will F. Holmes, *The White Chief: James Kimble Vardaman* (Baton Rouge, 1970), demonstrates that continued agrarian radicalism was the dominant theme of the Progressive Era in Mississippi.

Looking at the Progressive Era from the standpoint of the enactment of crucial legislation also leads to a greater appreciation of its complexity. Keith L. Bryant, Jr., "Kate Barnard, Organized Labor and Social Justice in Oklahoma during the Progressive Era," *Journal of Southern History* 35 (1969): 145-164; Yellowitz, *Labor and the Progressive Movement in New York State*; and Elizabeth H. Davidson, *Child Labor Legislation in the Southern Textile States*

(Chapel Hill, N.C., 1939), all document support for welfare legislation by organized labor. Norris Hundley, "Katherine Philips Edson and the Fight for the Minimum Wage, 1919-1923" *Pacific Historical Review* 29 (1960): 270-285, sees labor there as a major barrier to at least one major welfare measure. While many accounts contend that middle class reformers were antipathetic to the rise of organized labor, Yellowitz and Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890-1914* (New York, 1967), point out many areas of cooperation in both the public and private sector. While most traditional accounts have portrayed business as a major opponent of labor-welfare legislation, Marguerite Green, *The National Civic Federation and the American Labor Movement, 1900-1925* (Washington, D.C., 1956), discerns many areas of accommodation between organized labor and big business. Although Robert Asher, "The Origins of Workmen's Compensation in Minnesota," *Minnesota History* 44 (1974): 142-153, sees more alert business leaders as bowing to the inevitable in accepting workmen's compensation, James Weinstein, "Big Business and the Origins of Workmen's Compensation," *Labor History* 8 (1967): 156-174, argues that they have co-opted and emasculated such measures. While most traditional accounts have interpreted male support for woman suffrage as idealistic or yielding to pressure, Alan P. Grimes, *The Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage* (New York, 1967), identifies it with the same desire to "purify" America that produced prohibition and immigration restriction. Although most accounts of woman suffrage have emphasized its native, middle class character, Sharon Hartman Strom, "Leadership and Tactics in the American Woman Suffrage Movement: A New Perspective from Massachusetts," *Journal of American History* 62 (1975): 296-315, and Aileen Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement* (New York, 1965), both demonstrate the importance of building bridges to ethnic, working class women and converting professional politicians. Robert Smuts, *Women and Work in America* (New York, 1959), focuses even more directly on the role played by working class women.

Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916* (Glencoe, Ill., 1963), flays federal regulation of business as a contrivance to rationalize corporate control. G. Cullom Davis, "The Transformation of the Federal Trade Commission, 1914-1929," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 49 (1962): 437-455, sees the good intentions of reformers later undermined, while Robert W. Harbeson, "Railroads and Regulation, 1877-1916: Conspiracy or Public Interest?," *Journal of Economic History* 27 (1967): 230-242, contends that, whatever the framers' intention, regulation eventually served the public interest. Stanly P. Caine, *The Myth of Progressive Reform: Railroad Regulation in Wisconsin, 1903-1910* (Madison, Wis., 1970), posits mixed motives and results that failed to serve the public interest. Clifton K. Yearley, *The Money Machines* (Albany,

N.Y., 1970), discusses state income taxation as part of a movement by professionals and bureaucrats to rationalize the tax structure. W. Eliot Brownlee, Jr., *Progressivism and Economic Growth: The Wisconsin Income Tax, 1911-1929* (New York, 1974), argues that it was a misguided effort on the part of agrarian lawmakers to finance an "agricultural service state" at the expense of industrial growth. John D. Buenker, "Urban Liberalism and the Federal Income Tax Amendment," *Pennsylvania History* 36 (1969): 192-215, stresses the key role played by the representatives of urban political machines in ratification.

Recognition of the importance of cultural issues during the period has further underscored its diversity. Whereas Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York, 1955), styled prohibition a "caricature of the reform impulse," James Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920* (New York, 1970), deems it a logical outgrowth of native, Protestant, middle class Progressivism. Lewis Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists: Texas Democrats and the Wilson Era* (Austin, 1973), also contends that it was the reform wing of the party that pushed for an end to alcohol. Nuala McGann Drescher, "The Opposition to Prohibition, 1900-1919: A Social and Institutional Study" (dissertation, University of Delaware, 1964), describes the efforts of ethnic groups and self-interested businessmen to prevent enactment of the measure. Ethnic and religious differences hold the key to understanding the prohibition issue for Gilman Ostrander, *The Prohibition Movement in California, 1848-1933* (Berkeley, Cal., 1957), and John D. Buenker, "The Illinois Legislature and Prohibition, 1907-1919," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 62 (1969): 363-384. Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Urbana, Ill., 1966), see middle class concern for its slipping status as the key, while Robert A. Hohner, "The Prohibitionists Who Were They?" *South Atlantic Quarterly* 68 (1969): 491-505, concludes that prohibitionists were single-minded, middle class Protestants, both rural and urban, who often had little interest in other issues. While many accounts see prohibition as aimed at immigrants in the North and West, James B. Sellers, *The Prohibition Movement in Alabama, 1702-1943* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1946); Paul E. Issac, *Prohibition and Politics: Turbulent Decades in Tennessee, 1885-1920* (Knoxville, 1965); and Daniel J. Whitener, *Prohibition in North Carolina, 1715-1945* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1945), all demonstrate that it was directed at the black man in the South. In the West, according to Jimmie L. Franklin, *Born Sober: Prohibition in Oklahoma, 1907-1959* (Norman, Okla., 1971), it was often aimed at the red man.

The people and reasons behind immigration restriction are well detailed in Barbara M. Solomon, *Ancestors and Immigrants* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), and John Higham, *Strangers in the Land* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1955). Henry

B. Leonard, "The Open Gates: The Protest Against the Movement to Restrict European Immigrants, 1896-1924" (dissertation, Northwestern University, 1968), demonstrates that only some businessmen, social workers, and intellectuals joined with ethnic organizations in resisting immigration restriction. Rowland T. Berthoff "Southern Attitudes Toward Immigrants, 1865-1914," *Journal of Southern History* 17 (1951): 328-360, argues that the South occasionally encouraged immigration for economic reasons, but ended up opposing it on cultural grounds, while Morrell Heald, "Business Attitudes Toward European Immigration, 1880-1900," *Journal of Economic History* 13 (1953): 291-304, details an equally inconsistent course. Edward G. Hartmann, *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant* (New York, 1948), is an account sympathetic to newcomers, while Gerd Korman, *Industrialization, Immigrants and Americanizers* (Madison, Wis., 1967), analyzes proconformist efforts in industry and education by a coalition of social workers and businessmen. Gilbert Osofsky, "Progressivism and the Negro" *American Quarterly* 16 (1964): 153-168, contends that northern urban reformers aided blacks, while David W. Southern, *The Malignant Heritage: Yankee Progressives and the Negro Question* (Chicago, 1968), argues to the contrary. Steven J. Diner, "Chicago Social Workers and Blacks in the Progressive Era," *Social Service Review* 44 (1970): 393-409, finds that Chicago social workers had significantly different attitudes about blacks. Jack Temple Kirby, *Darkness at the Dawning: Race and Reform in the Progressive South* (Philadelphia, 1972), shows that reform there was flawed by the racial issue from beginning to end.

Since there is little agreement about the nature of the Progressive Era, there is no consensus about the reasons for its decline. Most scholars have posited World War I as a major cause, a view that is carefully reassessed by Walter I. Trattner, "Progressivism and World War I: A Reappraisal," *Mid-America* 44 (1962): 131-145. The cavalier disregard for civil liberties by the Wilson administration is emphasized by Harry N. Scheiber, *The Wilson Administration and Civil Liberties, 1917-1921* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1960). The growing fear of foreigners, radicals, and trade unions on the part of native, middle class reformers is illustrated by Robert K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (New York, 1955); John M. Blum, "Nativism, Anti-Radicalism and the Foreign Scare, 1917-1920" *Midwest Journal* 3 (1950-51): 46-53; and Stanley Coben, "A Study in Nativism: The American Red Scare of 1919-1920," *Political Science Quarterly* 79 (1964): 52-75. Herbert Margulies, "Anti-Catholicism in Wisconsin Politics, 1914-1920," *Mid-America* 44 (1962): 51-56, notes the anti-Catholicism engendered by the statewide candidacies of Catholic politicians after 1912, a circumstance duplicated in New York, Ohio, and Illinois. Fear of more radical departures in welfare by moderate reformers is evident in Forrest A. Walker, "Compul-

sory Health Insurance: The Next Great Step in Social Legislation," *Journal of American History* 56 (1969): 290-304. The failure of Wilson as a political leader is stressed by Seward Livermore, *Politics is Adjourned: Woodrow Wilson and the War Congress, 1916-1918* (Middletown, Conn., 1966), and Wesley M. Bagby, *The Road to Normalcy: The Presidential Campaign and Election of 1920* (Baltimore, 1962). David Burner, *The Politics of Provincialism: The Democratic Party in Transition, 1918-1932* (New York, 1968), stresses a mixture of cultural and economic factors resulting in political stagnation. Although somewhat dated, Herbert Margulies, "Recent Opinion on the Decline of the Progressive Era," *Mid-America* 45 (1963): 250-268, remains the best effort at an overall synthesis.

Not surprisingly, there is little consensus among historians concerning the Progressive Era's overall impact and its legacy to future generations. Until Hofstadter's previously cited *Age of Reform*, most judgments on the era were favorable, despite such adverse contemporary accounts as John Chamberlain, *Farewell to Reform: The Rise, Life and Decay of the Progressive Mind in America* (New York, 1933); Harold Stearns, *Liberalism in America* (New York, 1919); and Walter Weyl, *Tired Radicals* (New York, 1921). Hofstadter faulted "progressives" for their moral absolutism and narrowness of vision, judging them ineffectual in comparison with New Dealers. By far the most sweeping condemnation of the entire era has come from the "New Left" historians, such as Kolko, in the aforementioned *Triumph of Conservatism* and James L. Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State: 1900-1918* (Boston, 1968), who have branded "reform" as a blind for the imposition of corporate control. Grant McConnell, *Private Power and American Democracy* (New York, 1966): 30-50, sees "progressivism" as having many aspects and results, but erring in relying on experts to control technology. Jeremy Felt, "The Progressive Era in America, 1900-1917," *Societas* 3 (1973): 103-114 credits activists with good intentions, but faults them for failure to come to grips with the central problems of technological life, while Richard Abrams, "The Failure of Progressivism," in Richard Abrams and Lawrence Levine, *The Shaping of Twentieth Century America* (Boston, 1971): 207-224, says reform blunted the rougher edges of industrial-urban life, but failed to halt the growth of concentrated economic power. Arthur Mann, "The Progressive Tradition," in John Higham, ed., *The Reconstruction of American History* (New York, 1962), 157-179, criticizes the "progressive" tradition in the writing of history and calls for a more uninvolved and balanced treatment. Dewey W. Grantham, Jr., "The Progressive Era and the Reform Tradition," *Mid-America* 46 (1964): 227-251, acknowledges that the period's reformers were often naive and that their remedies sometimes misfired, but argues that the era's long-term importance lay in creating a broad range of social ideals that have sustained later activists. Thomas McCraw,

"The Legacy of the Progressive Era," in Gould, ed., *Progressive Era*, 181-202, provides a balanced analysis of many major reform efforts and concludes that "progressives," for all their faults and failures, rivaled the New Deal and the Founding Fathers for effectiveness.

Although most accounts have used World War I as the terminal date for the period, some scholars have argued that it carried over well into the 1920's. The classic statement is Arthur S. Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?" *American Historical Review* 64 (1959): 833-851. Jackson K. Putnam, "The Persistence of Progressivism in the 1920's: The Case of California," *Pacific Historical Review* 25 (1966): 395-412, finds that since progressivism there was a hodgepodge of disparate and often contradictory elements, it survived in a different and possibly less attractive form. Paul Glad, "Progressives and the Business Culture of the 1920's," *Journal of American History* 53 (1966): 75-89, contends that the origins of the New Era are to be found among several diverse strains of the earlier period. The debate over the relationship of the era to the New Deal again dates from Hofstadter's conclusion that the later reform period was a drastic new departure. Otis Graham documents that view in *An Encore for Reform: The Old Progressives and the New Deal* (New York, 1967). Robert L. Maxwell, "The Progressive Bridge: Reform Sentiment in the United States Between the New Freedom and the New Deal," *Indiana Magazine of History* 63 (1967): 83-102, stresses continuity, as does Clarke A. Chambers, *Seedtime of Reform: American Social Service and Social Action, 1918-1933* (Minneapolis, 1963). William E. Leuchtenberg, "The New Deal and the Analogue of War" in John Braeman, Robert Bremner and Everett Walters, *Change and Continuity in Twentieth Century America* (Columbus, O., 1956), grants that the Progressive Era was one source of the New Deal, but argues that the World War I experience was more pertinent. Andrew M. Scott, "The Progressive Era in Perspective," *Journal of Politics* 21 (1959): 685-701, turns the tables by styling the Progressive Era a radical departure and the New Deal as following its well-worn path.

ROBERT M. CRUNDEN

A number of general studies of the Progressive Era cover, among other themes, the basically religious nature of the period. Two essays are central: Clyde Griffen, "The Progressive Ethos," in Stanley Coben and Lorman Ratner, eds., *The Development of An American Culture* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1970), 120-149; and Jean B. Quandt, "Religion and Social Thought: The Secularization of Postmillennialism," *American Quarterly* 25 no. 4 (October, 1973): 390-409. The footnotes to these articles will lead students to many other marginally relevant materials. Slightly broader and longer studies on related themes are David Noble, *The Paradox of Progressive Thought* (Minneapolis, 1958), which is too abstract and opaque in places, but suggestive and interdisciplinary; and R. Jackson Wilson, *In Quest of Community* (New York, 1969), which contains sensitive biographical interpretations of key figures. John Chamberlain, *Farewell to Reform* (New York, 1932), was a pioneering radical synthesis that is still a useful foil to more recent works. Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind* (New Haven, 1950), was an ambitious attempt to interpret American thought since the 1880's, but while certain sections retain their excellence the book as a whole is not wearing well, frequently seems bloated, and omits important people and issues in an extraordinarily erratic way—Jane Addams, for example, does not appear in the index at all, and John Dewey is mentioned only in passing, while a third-rate thinker like Lester Ward receives far more attention than his limited importance merits. Likewise, Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston, 1955), while still a pioneering study that remains essential, badly needs to be rewritten by a newer generation of scholars.

Two of the better long texts which cover the Progressive Era are Stow Persons, *American Minds* (New York, 1958), and Ralph H. Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought* (New York, 1956). The collection of essays edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. and Morton White, *Paths of American*

Thought (Boston, 1963), contains a number of pieces valuable for this period. Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963* (New York, 1965), while in some ways erratic and even perverse, is at its best in the early chapters, and a valuable corrective to some earlier scholarly exaggerations. Sidney Fine, *Laissez Faire and the General-Welfare State* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1956), is a monumental history of thought related to political science up to the turn of the century, and irreplaceable for students of Progressive Era governmental thought. Charles Forcey, *The Crossroads of Liberalism* (New York, 1961), is a sound study of three not always typical minds active toward the end of the period.

Formal philosophical thought during the Progressive Era has been the subject of a number of books. Morton White has probably devoted more time to this area than anyone else, and his pioneering study, *The Origin of Dewey's Instrumentalism* (New York, 1943), remains quite possibly the best book on Dewey ever written. His later work has been broader and less successful; *Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism* (Boston, 1957) affectionately criticized a group of progressive liberals and attempted to group them in a meaningful way, but the book does not really succeed in unifying the men discussed, is poorly written, and retains its vogue only among students who specialized in areas other than intellectual history. *Science and Sentiment in America* (New York, 1972) is not nearly as organized nor as inclusive as its title suggests, and the quality of analysis is quite spotty; White, like most other students of the history of American philosophy, simply refuses to do much historical research, and ignores dissertations and articles that are both useful and available, and which might alter some of his generalizations. Philip P. Wiener, *Evolution and the Founders of Pragmatism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1949), remains useful but needs redoing, at least in part because of the awkward writing. John E. Smith, *The Spirit of American Philosophy* (New York, 1966), is far more graceful, and an example of how well the history of philosophy can be written if only a scholar will take the time to digest his materials fully. C. Hartley Grattan, *The Three Jameses* (New York, 1932), opened up that subject and remains a good biographical survey of a fascinating family. Two more recent books have become standard works for this generation. H.S. Thayer, *Meaning and Action* (Indianapolis, 1968), is available in both a full and a condensed version. The full version examines pragmatism within the context of Western philosophy, while the shorter version eliminates most of the European background. Both versions are marred by a great scorn for the historical method, and an all but complete lack of biographical research. It is quite clear that many of the best teachers of philosophy in recent years think ideas can be discussed in a vacuum, disconnected from history and life, even when, as in the case of Dewey, the import of these ideas implies precisely the opposite. Darnell

Rucker, *The Chicago Pragmatists* (Minneapolis, 1969), does somewhat better, but even he on occasion will cite materials from, say, the 1930's, to illustrate a point about the 1890's, with no awareness that time might have made a difference. None of these criticisms are valid for Dorothy Ross, *G. Stanley Hall* (Chicago, 1973), which is a model for what intellectual history as biography can be.

Direct work on American religion must now begin with Sydney E. Ahlstrom's enormous synthesis, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven, 1972). It may be supplemented by three general interpretive studies: Robert T. Handy, *A Christian America* (New York, 1971); Sydney E. Mead, *The Lively Experiment* (New York, 1963); and Martin E. Marty, *Righteous Empire* (New York, 1970). Useful studies which are more focused on the Progressive Era include Aaron I. Abell, *The Urban Impact on American Protestantism, 1865-1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1943); Charles H. Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism, 1865-1915* (New Haven, 1940); and Henry May, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America* (New York, 1949). A case study of how an institution could move from inner to outer faith, as it were, is John Barnard, *From Evangelicalism to Progressivism at Oberlin College, 1866-1917* (Columbus, O., 1969). Several biographies provide further examples: Benjamin G. Rader, *The Academic Mind and Reform* (Lexington, Ky., 1966), on Richard Ely; Jacob H. Dorn, *Washington Gladden* (Columbus, O., 1967); and Louise C. Wade, *Graham Taylor* (Chicago, 1964).

The basically religious nature of progressivism comes out quite clearly in the autobiographies left by that extraordinarily self-analytical group of men who were active within the spirit of reform. Ray Stannard Baker, especially in *American Chronicle* (New York, 1945), is perhaps the archetypal progressive in his articulate moralism. His friends in reform journalism left similar works, as in *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens* (New York, 1931), and Ida Tarbell, *All In the Day's Work* (New York, 1939). Writers who were also politically active left similar records, as in Brand Whitlock, *Forty Years of It* (New York, 1914), and Frederic C. Howe, *The Confessions of a Reformer* (New York, 1925). Albert Jay Nock, *The Memoirs of A Superfluous Man* (New York, 1943), details the course of a former minister and follower of Henry George who lost his faith in human perfectibility, and came to reject much of twentieth century liberalism. Jane Addams' *Twenty Years At Hull-House* (New York, 1910), provides the best account of the making of a social worker, while Frank Lloyd Wright, in *An Autobiography* (New York, 1943), tells us in detail about the childhood of the leading progressive figure in the fine arts. Washington Gladden, in *Recollections* (Boston, 1909), presents the view of a man who remained within the church while pursuing social justice. Two good collections of letters supplement these works: Allan

Nevins, ed., *The Letters of Brand Whitlock* (New York, 1936), and Ella Winter and Granville Hicks, eds., *The Letters of Lincoln Steffens* (New York, 1938).

The best general surveys of the literature of the period are Jay Martin, *Harvests of Change* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1967), and Everett Carter, *Howells and the Age of Realism* (Philadelphia, 1954). Louis Filler's enthusiastic *The Muckrakers: Crusaders For American Liberalism* (Chicago, 1968), even though first conceived in the 1930's, remains the best study of that group. Walter B. Rideout, *The Radical Novel in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), Bernard Duffey, *The Chicago Renaissance in American Letters* (East Lansing, Mich., 1954), and Dale Kramer, *Chicago Renaissance* (New York, 1966), cover more restricted topics. The man and the magazine who gave the Christian muckrakers their greatest forum are well treated in Peter Lyon, *Success Story: The Life and Times of S.S. McClure* (New York, 1963), and Harold S. Wilson, *McClure's Magazine and the Muckrakers* (Princeton, 1970). Other key progressive writers are analyzed in the following: Justin Kaplan, *Lincoln Steffens* (New York, 1974); Robert M. Crunden, *A Hero In Spite of Himself* (New York, 1969), on Brand Whitlock, and *The Mind and Art of Albert Jay Nock* (Chicago, 1964); Allen E. Davis, *American Heroine* (New York, 1973), on Jane Addams; John E. Semonche, *Ray Stannard Baker*, (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1969); and Robert C. Bannister, Jr., *Ray Stannard Baker* (New Haven, 1966).

Students and teachers now have a number of textbooks to use in studying various aspects of progressivism. The grandfather of them all is Perry Miller, ed., *American Thought: Civil War to World War I* (New York, 1954), which covers the origins of progressivism as well as its intellectual fruition, and offers a stunning synthesis in its lengthy introduction. R.J. Wilson, ed., *Darwinism and the American Intellectual* (Homewood, Ill., 1967), provides a good beginning essential for an understanding of the world in which most progressives grew up. It should be supplemented by William H. Goetzmann, ed., *The American Hegelians* (New York, 1973), which not only demonstrates a major source for American pragmatism, but also insists rightly on the intellectual importance of the American West. Arthur and Lila Weinberg, eds., *The Muckrakers* (New York, 1961), offer a good survey of specific reform writings. Max H. Fisch, ed., *Classic American Philosophers* (New York, 1951), offers a good introduction to, and selections from, the key thinkers of this, the richest period in the history of American philosophy, and one in which all the major, American-born figures, often seem obsessed with religious themes. Three volumes in the generally excellent American Heritage Series provide good introductions to individuals: William H. Harbaugh, ed., *The Writings of Theodore Roosevelt* (Indianapolis, 1967); E. David Cronon, ed., *The Political Thought of Woodrow Wilson* (Indianapolis, 1965); and

Christopher Lasch, ed., *The Social Thought of Jane Addams* (Indianapolis, 1965).

A number of more specialized subjects relevant to progressivism have also received scholarly attention. Lawrence Cremin, *The Transformation of the School* (New York, 1961), treats education as a serious scholarly subject and demonstrates beautifully its place in the larger framework of progressivism. It should be supplemented by the old but still quite useful work of Merle Curti, *The Social Ideas of American Educators* (Paterson, N.J., 1963). Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads For Reform* (New York, 1967), does an equally fine job for the social settlements. George M. Frederickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind* (New York, 1971), has a concluding chapter on the Progressive Era; the black version of the white world appears in S.P. Fullinwider, *The Mind and Mood of Black America* (Homewood, Ill., 1969), and August Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1963). Richard Hofstadter has treated the field of history in *The Progressive Historians* (New York, 1968), which contains some of the best work available anywhere on Turner, Parrington and Beard. James H. Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), covers a typical, moralistic progressive reform attempt. Robert C. Twombly, *Frank Lloyd Wright* (New York, 1973), gives us one of the few modern lives of a progressive in the fine arts, although the lack of cooperation from the Wright cult seriously hindered the availability of sources.

Even farther afield from conventional areas of progressive scholarship, Charles Ives and musical progressivism have recently received extensive attention. I have analyzed his music from a stance similar to that expressed in this book in "Charles Ives' Innovative Nostalgia," *The Choral Journal* 15 (December, 1974): 5-12. R. Sandra Perry, *Charles Ives and the American Mind* (Kent, O., 1974), tackles a number of important and neglected ways in which music and other areas of the culture interrelate, with detailed discussions of religion, literature and philosophy and their impact on the music. Frank Rossiter, *Charles Ives and His America* (New York, 1975), provides a wealth of biographical material unavailable elsewhere.

Several unpublished dissertations also deserve mention because they cover important material not available in published works. Judson A. Grenier, "The Origins and Nature of Progressive Muckraking," (University of California at Los Angeles, 1965), is a mine of data on the muckrakers as individuals and as a group. Peter J. Frederick, "European Influences on the Awakening of the American Social Conscience, 1886-1904," (University of California at Berkeley, 1966), concentrates on the impact which Ruskin, Tolstoy and Mazzini had on a group of American reformers, including several progressives. Dong-Bai Chai, "Josiah Strong: Apostle of Anglo-Saxonism and

Social Christianity," (University of Texas, 1972), and Herbert R. Dieterich, "Patterns of Dissent: The Reform Ideas and Activities of George D. Herron," (University of New Mexico, 1957), are the best studies of two reform-minded clergy. William Bloodworth, "The Early Years of Upton Sinclair," (University of Texas, 1972), gives conclusive evidence that birth in the South and a socialist philosophy did not necessarily separate a reformer from mainstream American moralism.

JOHN C. BURNHAM

Perusal of the footnotes in the essays in this volume shows that the three authors often use the same sources in different ways. Guides to the reading can therefore suggest both interpretation and subject matter. Such lists as Arthur S. Link and William M. Leary, Jr., *The Progressive Era and the Great War, 1896-1920* (New York, 1969), need to be used imaginatively. A very full recent guide to the trailing off of progressivism after World War I is in LeRoy Ashby, *The Spearless Leader: Senator Borah and the Progressive Movement in the 1920's* (Urbana, Ill., 1972). This conventional approach should be supplemented with Paul F. Bourke, "Culture and the Status of Politics, 1909-1917: Studies in the Social Criticism of Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, Randolph Bourne and Van Wyck Brooks" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1967).

General guides, however thorough, tend to concentrate on either political history or studies specifically labelled reform or progressivism. In so doing, they miss much of what was actually happening—the changes in population composition and distribution, relative changes in school populations, institutional changes in business, the amount of money spent on sewers, systematic variation in aspiration and life style and grouping, and many other major facets of American life. In fact, there is not any abundance of historical work dealing with the broader cultural events of those years—even that impinging on politics, such as Samuel P. Hays, "The Social Analysis of American Political History, 1880-1920," *Political Science Quarterly* 80 (1965): 373-394, or Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade, Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Urbana, Ill., 1963).

Instead, one has to trace the reform incident to other kinds of history. Again, this has to be done imaginatively. The leadership patterns, for example, found in such works as Roy Lubove, *The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880-1930* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965),

and Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform: A Study of the Progressive Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), have to be expanded piece by piece in innumerable biographies of many other kinds of professionals.

Grouping phenomena—the voluntary association and the interest group—are central to an understanding of the progressive movement. Conceptual material is found in Arnold M. Rose, "Voluntary Associations Under Conditions of Competition and Conflict," *Social Forces* 34 (1955): 159-163; Roberta Ash, *Social Movements in America* (Chicago, 1972); Theodore Lowi, "The Public Philosophy: Interest-Group Liberalism," *American Political Science Review* 61 (1967): 5-24. Two excellent specific examples are described in Louis Galambos, *Competition & Cooperation: The Emergence of a National Trade Association* (Baltimore, 1966), and Jonathan Lurie, "Private Associations, Internal Regulation and Progressivism: The Chicago Board of Trade, 1880-1923, As a Case Study," *American Journal of Legal History* 16 (1972): 215-238.

Some historical works do cover the broader and more neglected aspects of progressivism explicitly. Among the more suggestive monographs are Keach Johnson, "Iowa Dairying at the Turn of the Century: The New Agriculture and Progressivism," *Agricultural History* 45 (1971): 95-120; William L. Bowers, "Country-Life Reform, 1900-1920: A Neglected Aspect of Progressive Era History," *Agricultural History* 45 (1971): 211-221; Joel Spring, "Education and Progressivism," *History of Education Quarterly* 10 (1970): 53-71; Milton Derber, "The Idea of Industrial Democracy in America, 1898-1915," *Labor History* 7 (1966): 259-286; Roy Lubove, "The Progressives and the Prostitute," *The Historian* 24 (1962): 308-330; John C. Burnham, "Psychiatry, Psychology and the Progressive Movement," *American Quarterly* 12 (1960): 457-465.

The intellectual history of progressives has enjoyed considerable scholarly attention. Among the studies that particularly show the inspired condition of reformers are John Lee Eighmy, "Religious Liberalism in the South During the Progressive Era," *Church History* 38 (1969): 359-372; Timothy L. Smith, "Progressivism in American Education, 1880-1900," *Harvard Educational Review* 31 (1961): 168-193; Mody C. Boatright, "Theodore Roosevelt: Social Darwinism and the Cowboy," *Texas Quarterly* 7 (1964): 11-20; James R. McGovern, "David Graham Phillips and the Virility Impulse of Progressives," *New England Quarterly* 39 (1966): 334-355; Richard Hofstadter, "'Idealists and Professors and Sore-Heads': The Genteel Reformers," *Columbia University Forum* 5 (1962): 4-11.

Historical accounts of the changes in technology, science, and medicine and the immense impact that all three had on Americans' expectations are few and far between except incidentally in biographies. Important accounts of engineering include George V. Thompson, "Intercompany Technical

Standardization in the Early American Automobile Industry," *Journal of Economic History* 14 (1954): 1-20; Edwin T. Layton, Jr., *The Revolt of the Engineers: Social Responsibility and the American Engineering Profession* (Cleveland, 1971); Samuel Haber, *Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920* (Chicago, 1964); Daniel Nelson and Stuart Campbell, "Taylorism Versus Welfare Work in American Industry: H.L. Gantt and the Bancrofts," *Business History Review* 46 (1972): 82-100. Science is taken up specifically in A. Hunter Dupree, ed., *Science and the Emergence of Modern America* (Chicago, 1963). Medicine as a progressive enterprise appears in James H. Cassedy, "The 'Germ of Laziness' in the South, 1900-1915: Charles Wardell Stiles and the Progressive Paradox," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (1971): 159-169; Lloyd C. Taylor, Jr., *The Medical Profession and Social Reform, 1885-1945* (New York, 1974); John C. Burnham, "The Progressive Era Revolution in American Attitudes Toward Sex," *Journal of American History* 59 (1973): 885-908; John C. Burnham, "Medical Specialists and Movements Toward Social Control in the Progressive Era: Three Examples," in Jerry Israel, ed., *Building the Organizational Society: Essays on Associational Activities in Modern America* (New York, 1972), 19-30.

Much of the most important information is found in the works of historians for whom the progressive movement is more or less incidental. Some works are essentially subject oriented, like Gerald D. Nash, *State Government and Economic Development: A History of Administrative Policies in California, 1849-1933* (Berkeley, 1964); Gerd Korman, *Industrialization, Immigrants, and Americanizers: The View from Milwaukee, 1866-1921* (Madison, Wis., 1967); and Richard Weiss, *The American Myth of Success, From Horatio Alger to Norman Vincent Peale* (New York, 1969). Other works cover topics over such a broad sweep of time that progressivism is lost in another perspective, as in Scott M. Cutlip, *Fund Raising in the United States: Its Role in Philanthropy* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1965), and Aaron I. Abell, *American Catholicism and Social Action: A Search for Social Justice, 1865-1950* (Garden City, N.Y., 1960).

All such background, and a good deal more, however, is only preparatory to the real appreciation of what progressivism meant to the people of those times, an appreciation that derives only from a sensitive reading of the historical record, from the great intellectual statements, such as Walter Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery: An Attempt to Diagnose the Current Unrest* (New York, 1914), to files of relevant journals, ranging over fields from the *Scientific American Supplement* to *The Survey* and the growing numbers of "little magazines."

PROGRESSIVISM

by John D. Buenker, John C. Burnham, and Robert Crunden

The early years of the twentieth century were jarred by widespread agitation for social reform. A wide array of social movements picked up steam during these years, from the antitrust movement to the Prohibition movement.

Today this period, which is often unquestioningly referred to as the "Progressive Era," is a subject of energetic debate. What in fact are the defining characteristics of this era? Did it ever really exist as an identifiable phase of United States history?

In this fascinating work, three well-known historians of the progressive years of American history offer three highly original — and conflicting — interpretations of the period. This stimulating blend of viewpoints forces the reader to come to terms with the complexity of this controversial historical subject.

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